



*Boston University Academy Model United Nations Conference XI*

*Saturday, January 28th to Sunday, January 29th, 2023*

*Boston University Academy*

*Boston, MA*

**UN COMMITTEE: DISARMAMENT AND  
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY  
(DISEC)**

*Background Guide*

## ***Introduction from the chair and vice-chair:***

Hello, Delegates:

For this year's conference, we have chosen two topics to discuss: regulating lethal autonomous weapons and preventing modern day piracy. In this committee, we will be focusing on autonomous weapons and piracy as threats to international security. This background guide has some background information, but it is important that you do your own research and discuss how these threats may affect your country.

We're looking forward to meeting you at the conference,

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## ***Committee Information:***

DISEC deals with disarmament, global challenges, and threats to peace that affect the international community and seeks out solutions to the challenges in the international security regime.

It considers all disarmament and international security matters within the scope of the Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any other organ of the United Nations; the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments; promotion of cooperative arrangements and measures aimed at strengthening stability through lower levels of armaments.

## ***Position Paper Guidelines:***

**This committee requires two position papers.** They will be on the topics of submarines and their use in the military and artificial intelligence. The absence of at least one position paper will disqualify you (the delegate) from receiving an award. The quality, depth, and clarity of your position paper(s) will influence award decisions. Each position paper should be 1-3 pages and double-spaced. This includes citations which are preferably in the format of footnotes. To insert a footnote, simply click *Insert > Footnote*. Note: a footnote goes after the period. Position papers should follow a general outline with three paragraphs. This is only a suggestion, as long as the paper fits the aforementioned specifications, the number of paragraphs will not be taken into consideration.

### **Possible position paper outline:**

- 1) Introduction to your delegation and the topic as a whole.
- 2) The position of your delegation.
- 3) Your delegations proposed solutions.

Furthermore, the position paper must be titled in the following format:

**Delegation:** Loeina Sooch and Emmanuel Smirnakis

**School:** Boston University Academy

**Committee:** DISEC

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

## *Topic 1: Regulating Lethal Autonomous Weapons*

### **General Overview:**

Autonomous weapons are regarded by many people as a threat to humanity. In 2013, Human Rights Watch launched the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots. They believe that weapons that can attack humans unprompted put us all in peril. Putting trust in machines to protect citizens leads to many more risks.

Contrarily, many countries benefit from the general use of artificial intelligence in the military. It is helpful in smaller militaries with low manpower because it increases force exerted by a military. It increases the efficiency of each warfighter, causing less warfighters to be a necessity. Artificial intelligence in the military also diminishes the risk of casualties since less humans are needed on the battlefield. Expeditions that are long, harmful or dangerous can now be completed without putting humans through them. As a military tactic, AI does not generally employ the same strategies as humans. It will be harder for opponents to predict their movements. Many people also believe that it is more ethically right to take humans out of the battlefield. Since there is less risk of death on the battlefield, people maintain that militaristic AI is crucial. Because of these advantages, countries have been investing heavily in military AI.

Many countries also do not agree with Lethal Autonomous Weapons. They believe that machines that can hurt humans are objectively harmful to society. Another part of the issue is that many machines are not specifically for offensive or defensive purposes. If machines are attacking other countries making their own free will, it opens up danger that is hard for humans to fight against. It is easy for humans to not take responsibility for the actions that AI take, as well as blaming their harms on actions they did make.

One resolution on the table for this issue is to regulate Lethal Autonomous Weapons. With this resolutions comes many challenges. First off, many people disagree on the definition of Autonomous Weapons. Plenty of representatives advocate for a full ban on autonomous weapons. This would include production, deployment, but many argue for research and trial as well.

## **Further Research:**

1. <https://www.stopkillerrobots.org/>
2. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/08/10/stopping-killer-robots/country-positions-banning-fully-autonomous-weapons-and>
3. <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/May-June-2017/Pros-and-Cons-of-Autonomous-Weapons-Systems/>
4. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11150>
5. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/05/11/killer-robots-lethal-autonomous-weapons-systems-ukraine-libya-regulation/>
6. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/refreshed-autonomous-weapons-policy-will-be-critical-us-global-leadership-moving-forward>

## **Bloc positions – Topic 1:**

Japan, Malaysia, Panama, Liberia, Ghana, Canada, France, Namibia, Nigeria, Morocco, South Korea: Supporting international action to regulate lethal autonomous weapons

United States, Indonesia, Australia, North Korea, South Africa, Netherlands, Iran, Yemen, Somalia, United Kingdom, Germany: Neutral or against regulating lethal autonomous weapons

## *Topic 2: Preventing Modern Day Piracy at Sea*

### **General Overview:**

Today, Piracy is an issue that plagues the worlds seas. Piracy continues to be the largest cause of maritime insecurity and is responsible for billions of dollars of lost income for transportation companies. One ship alone can be ransomed for tens of millions of dollars, funding illegal and dangerous organizations in the least stable nations. The gulf of Aiden has become the most prevalent places for pirate attacks, with pirates from Somalia boarding ships bound for the Suez Canal and ransoming them to their respective owners. The west coast of Africa accounts for nearly 40% of global piracy, with these attacks being the most violent. In Asia, the straits of Malacca have become a hub of piracy, with rates peaking in 2011. Since then the number of attacks have decreased due to international efforts to protect commercial ships.



These attacks are focused in a few key locations around the world, typically occurring off the coast of unstable or war torn regions. UN efforts to stabilize these regions does help to

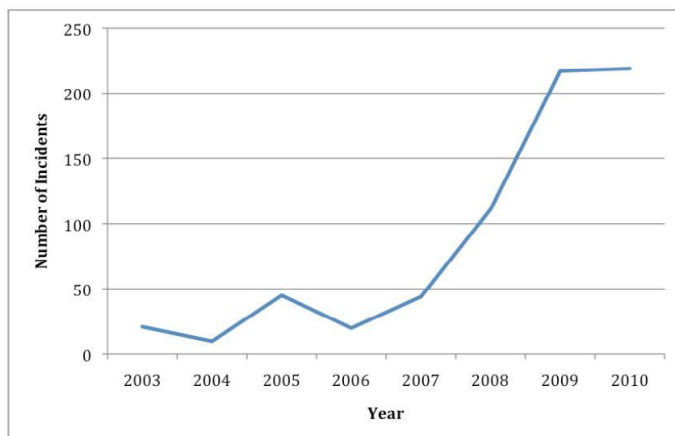
decrease piracy, however there are more direct actions that can be taken. Countries such as the US, Australia, and France have deployed naval resources to these regions to discourage pirates from operating, which has had some success in select areas which are easily accessible. However, in Somalia naval patrols have been unable to eliminate this piracy due to the large regions necessary to patrol. Another action which can be taken is weakening pirate strongholds on land. Somali pirates have tended to live in several coastal towns, enabling sea based operations to destroy their strongholds. Finally, shipping companies have begun buying piracy insurance to enable them to pay the ransom when their ships are pirated. This is a short term solution to the issue faced by companies, yet still fails to stop the spread of money to dangerous organizations.

The issue of piracy raises the questions of the cost due to the loss of goods versus the cost of prevention. The immediate cost of piracy falls on wealthy western countries like the US and the Netherlands where shipping companies are based. The cost of the lost goods falls on all countries including less wealthy countries because they are much more vulnerable to a sudden loss in goods. In the end, the cost of defending from piracy falls on countries with the most powerful navies: the US and the EU. The illumination of piracy has the less talked about effect of illuminating a source of income for communities in countries where there are otherwise very few opportunities. The illuminations of piracy should also account for the damaging effects on the people of countries like Somalia and Nigeria.

There are two main types of piracy which have emerged since the rise in modern piracy in the 1980's. Small scale pirates steal ships with the goal of selling their goods and resources. These pirates are typically from poor countries and are untrained. They are usually less likely to

funnel profits to dangerous organizations and unfriendly governments. The larger scale pirates tend to be better trained and belong to an organization or collective. Instead of simply selling the stolen goods, they ransom the ship and sailors for significantly larger profits reaching into the tens of millions of dollars. The much larger profits are likely to be funneled to dangerous organizations and

Attempted and Successful Attacks by Somali Pirates



governments who rely on illegal sources of income to operate.

### **Further Research:**

1. <https://www.tarideal.com/modern-day-pirates-what-can-we-do-maritime-security/>
2. <https://www.gard.no/web/content/piracy-and-armed-robbery-at-sea>
3. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/04/17/the-seven-ways-to-stop-piracy/>
4. <http://www.thewayofthepirates.com/piracy-history/modern-piracy/>
5. <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/06/02/pirates-are-making-a-comeback-on-the-high-seas-and-have-africa-and-asia-in-their-sights.html>
6. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/11/1130937>
7. <https://www.un.org/depts/los/piracy/piracy.htm>
8. <https://www.bimco.org/news/security/20210618-un-report>

### **Bloc positions – Topic 2:**

United States, Australia, Japan, South Africa, Netherlands, Canada, France, United Kingdom, Germany, Morocco, South Korea: Supporting international action to prevent piracy globally.

Indonesia, Malaysia, Panama, Liberia, North Korea, Iran, Yemen, Somalia, Namibia, Nigeria, Ghana: Neutral or against international action to prevent piracy globally.