OSCE

UPDATE PAPER

NHSMUN
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Dear Delegates,

My name is Yuliia Kopalivska, and I want to welcome you to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)! I look forward to serving as your Assistant Director for Session I for NHSMUN 2025. This is my first time staffing a conference ever! However, I previously attended NHSMUN in 2023 as a delegate in UNEA. I loved it so much!

I am a freshman at Washington and Lee University, intending to major in Global Politics and Russian and Eastern European Studies. Coming from Ukraine, I have always had an interest in global affairs. Studying in the United States has further deepened my passion for exploring cultures and learning about international cooperation. In my free time, I love playing the piano and the guitar. I also enjoy listening to music, going on hikes, and hanging out with people!

Although I have been involved in Model United Nations for just two and a half years, the experience has been transformative. Not only was I able to work on my debate and presentational skills, but it has also made me much more confident. My communication and listening skills have improved significantly, and I discovered things about the world that I would have never learned otherwise. Moreover, I met so many amazing people and made extremely good friends and valuable connections.

Our committee will focus on two important topics: "Protecting Human Rights of Displaced Persons in Ukraine" and "Enhancing Global Arms Control with Technology." I am so excited to engage in discussions about these impactful topics with all of you during the committee sessions. I believe in all of you, and best of luck with your preparations! See you soon!

Sincerely,

Yuliia Kopalivska

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Session I

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National High School Model United Nations

Dear Delegates,

My name is Ariana Campos, and I am proud to say that I will be this year's Assistant Director for session II of NHSMUN2025. Welcome to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)! This is my first time being a staff member at NHSMUN, but I've attended the conference as a delegate of the Special Political and Decolonization committee in 2023, where I fell in love with the culture and welcoming environment of the conference.

I live in Lima, Peru and just graduated high school this december and I am planning on studying international Business administration in the fall. On a more personal note, I enjoy surfing and listening to music. I am an avid reader and enjoy spending time with my friends and family. I've been a part of the MUN world for over 5 years now, both as a delegate and member of different conference staff, and I loved every minute of it! MUN has benefited my life in more ways than I first realized. Engaging in debates on pressing global issues has taught me that history and world affairs are often subjective, with each individual and nation offering unique and valuable perspectives. It helped me grow into someone who's eager to learn more about every topic I come across and I deeply appreciate everything this lovely community has given me. I have grown into someone who is much more aware of the world-class issues happening in the day-to-day age. On a more personal level Model United Nations has helped me improve my public speaking and helped me break out of my shell, making me the strong, independent, and knowledgeable woman I am today. But without a doubt, the best thing I have gained from MUN has been the amazing people I've met, who have turned not only into colleagues but friends too.

As a former NHSMUN delegate I understand the level of stress many of you are facing as of right now. So please feel free to reach out if you have any doubts about the committee and the conference overall. I am genuinely excited to listen to the passionate discourse that will arise as you all collaboratively and diplomatically work together to pose questions, develop solutions, and learn more about the topic at hand.

I wish you the best of luck and are so excited to see you this march!

Best wishes,

Ariana Campos

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Session II

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TOPIC A:
HUMAN RIGHTS OF DISPLACED PERSONS IN UKRAINE

Introduction

Since February 2022, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine has led to one of the largest displacement crises in Europe since the Second World War. To this day, more than three million Ukrainians are currently displaced within their own country.[1] Almost six million people have sought refuge in neighboring countries, such as Poland or Germany, and other parts of Europe.[2] These people face a range of human rights challenges, including the loss of access to essential services, lack of safe housing, separation from family members, and the trauma of war. Even though the initial humanitarian crisis has passed, there is an even bigger problem the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) must address after the war. A lot still needs to be done to help aid Ukrainians that have been displaced by the conflict. Housing, protection from exploitation, and preparing for resettlement is important. There are also many vulnerable groups in this conflict that may not necessarily have enough support from governments housing them. As the OSCE, the committee should investigate ways to not just protect everyday Ukrainians. The organization must also consider groups that often do not have their own voice and protections. Protecting the human rights of displaced persons has become an urgent and critical issue.[3]

The OSCE plays a crucial role in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, particularly for displaced persons.[4] OSCE continues to work closely with organizations like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Organization for Migration (IOM) to ensure displaced individuals have access to essential services such as food, water, and shelter. This coordination is important since it requires the resources of multiple stakeholders to provide aid to those that need it the most. With so many refugees, coordination among agencies is crucial to maintain a cohesive response. The OSCE also advocates for the restoration of critical infrastructure in conflict-affected areas. This is especially important since infrastructure is needed to support the Ukrainian economy during the war. It is also part of a much larger reconstruction effort to help the country recover once the war is over. The organization continues to support efforts to protect the legal rights of displaced Ukrainians, pushing for their legal recognition, the right to work, and access to asylum processes. Its comprehensive approach is vital in mitigating the impact of displacement and improving conditions for affected populations amidst ongoing conflict.[5] While the organization has made some progress regarding the Advocacy for Host Country Policies, preventing armed combat in the area and supporting the underprivileged groups, it also had some limitations and failures.

Internal and Cross-Border Humanitarian Challenges

Internally, the situation in Ukraine amounted to one of the largest displacement crises in the world, where millions of people have had to flee their homes. At the end of 2024, internally displaced persons (IDPs) remained in precarious conditions, as many continued to live in temporary shelters, overcrowded hostels, overcrowded hostels, or makeshift housing.[6] Some have been able to relocate to safer areas within the country, such as Kyiv or western Ukraine. Yet many continue to face immense challenges in securing employment, legal documentation, and long-term housing.

The humanitarian crisis, in the presence of millions of displaced persons, has been exacerbated by poor infrastructure support

1 United Nations, "Ukraine: Over 6 Million Refugees Spread across Europe," United Nations Western Europe, September 11, 2024, https://unric.org/en/ukraine-over-6-million-refugees-spread-across-europe/.
2 United Nations, "Ukraine: Over 6 Million Refugees Spread across Europe."
3 United Nations, "Ukraine: Over 6 Million Refugees Spread across Europe."
4 United Nations, "Ukraine: Over 6 Million Refugees Spread across Europe."
5 United Nations, "Ukraine: Over 6 Million Refugees Spread across Europe."
6 United Nations, "Ukraine: Over 6 Million Refugees Spread across Europe,"

Infrastructure of the University of the State Tax Service of Ukraine in Irpin damaged by Russian shelling

Credit: Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine

in Ukraine. In such a situation, internally and externally displaced populations have to struggle for basic needs. At the end of December 2024, critical infrastructure remained either severely damaged or destroyed due to continued fighting, especially in eastern and southern parts of Ukraine.[7] This leaves these regions with limited access to key services such as healthcare, education, and clean water. Key facilities such as hospitals, schools, and water treatment plants have meanwhile been damaged through military action, which impedes IDPs' access to basic services. Many persons displaced are living in temporary centers that are either overcrowded or inadequate, lacking proper sanitation and heating. A lack of reliable transportation networks has affected the ability to move internally displaced persons to a safer area or to get humanitarian aid to those who most need it. Generally, many IDPs have been living in a state of continuous uncertainty due to the very slow process of reconstruction and the absence of significant financial resources. This would allow access to such essential services and support as required for survival and recovery.

The infrastructure destruction in Ukraine became more serious

over the continuing conflict and harshest winter months the country must face in 2024. Winter conditions in Ukraine can be brutally cold, with below-zero degrees celsius temperatures commonly occurring.[8] The impact of such conditions only adds to the many challenges IDPs must already face. Wrecked critical infrastructures include the power grid, water supplies, and heating systems. These important pieces of infrastructure were already limited to temporary shelters and makeshift homes. This has left millions of displaced persons open to extreme cold and associated health hazards.[9] Even where these facilities are present, power outages have interrupted their availability. These outages have often happened in the eastern and southern regions of the country where the fighting has been the worst. Continued shelling and bombing of infrastructure by Russian forces have made it very difficult to have reliable infrastructure in these parts of the country. Additionally, the winter conditions have also taken a heavy toll on transport infrastructure. Routes commonly used by humanitarian assistance and displaced persons heading to safer areas have become increasingly difficult to access.[10] This is due to damage by bombing or weather-related erosion. As

7   United Nations, "Ukraine: Over 6 Million Refugees Spread across Europe,"
8   International Rescue Committee, "What Ukrainians Need to Survive Their Toughest Winter Yet," The IRC, November 8, 2024, https://www.rescue.org/article/what-ukrainians-need-survive-winter.
9   International Rescue Committee, "What Ukrainians Need to Survive Their Toughest Winter Yet,"
10   Amnesty International, "Russia/Ukraine: Latest Massive Missile Strike on Critical Infrastructure Is a War Crime," Amnesty International, November 28, 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/11/russia-ukraine-latest-massive-missile-strike-on-critical-infrastructure-is-a-war-crime/.

a result, this has trapped many people in areas where food, medicine, and other basic supplies are increasingly scarce. In many places, individuals rely on emergency delivery of water, which is still insufficient to satisfy the needs of larger populations. The destruction of water supply systems and sewage treatment plants has also stopped access to clean water and sanitation.[11] In the cold months, the freezing of water pipes further complicates the situation, increasing the likelihood of waterborne diseases and hygiene-related illnesses.

The ongoing damage during the cold months also put pressure on host communities in relatively safer parts of Ukraine. Many internally displaced persons have tried to the western part of the country.[12] The large influx of IDPs has complicated many things. These regions face the dual challenge of accommodating large numbers of displaced persons while managing their own winter needs. Local authorities and humanitarian organizations have struggled to address these demands. This has resulted in overcrowding in available housing and further strain on social services. All these factors make it difficult to meet even the most basic needs of both the displaced and the host communities. Healthcare systems in these regions are also overloaded. Most trade and supplies going into Ukraine have been focused on military equipment. As a result, a lot of humanitarian aid has been set aside to allow military gear to enter the country first.[13] This leads to a lack of the necessary resources or personnel to aid all those in need. Russian forces have also bombed multiple healthcare facilities. This has created a strain on the availability of medical help that is made worse by the lack of access to sanitation and clean water.[14] As a growing number of individuals contract hygiene-related diseases, hospitals and clinics struggle to keep up with care demands.

The Ukrainian government, alongside humanitarian organizations, has made efforts to provide aid and facilitate relocation. However, many of these aid resources remain strained. Reconstruction of key infrastructure is slow. The extent of the destruction across the country often makes it impossible for the families who have fled to return to their homes even outside conflict zones. The constantly changing situation in Ukraine has made it difficult to get access to housing. Many people have also refused to get housing in some major cities. This is out of fear of the continued Russian targeting of apartment complexes and the many missile strikes on densely populated areas.[15] Employment opportunities have also been unstable with many businesses unsure about how safe it is to continue operating.[16] To make matters worse, there are less available workers in Ukraine which has led to a labor shortage in the country.[17] Outside of Ukraine, over six million Ukrainians have fled to neighboring countries.[18] At the beginning of the war, many of these host countries opened their borders and provided emergency assistance. However, the unprecedented magnitude of this displacement has put a lot of stress on local systems. This includes housing, healthcare, and social services. The long nature of this war has also caused some governments to rethink their commitment to providing support to displaced Ukrainians. Long-term solutions are urgently needed in the cases of many asylum seekers for access to employment, education for children, and mental health support as they continue to cope with the trauma of war.

Refugees of the conflict continue to face issues in finding employment or asylum. The increasing demand on acquiring such services, paired with a growing anti-immigrant sentiment in many host countries, has made the bureaucratic process for jobs and asylum complicated and slow.[19] Similar issues arise

11   Amnesty International, "Russia/Ukraine: Latest Massive Missile Strike on Critical Infrastructure Is a War Crime,"
12   United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees , "Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) | UNHCR Ukraine," UNHCR Ukraine, 2022, https://www.unhcr.org/ua/en/internally-displaced-persons-idp.
13   United Nations Ukraine, "1,000 Days of Full-Scale War in Ukraine: A Call for Sustained Humanitarian Aid amid Escalating Attacks," UN Ukraine, 2024, https://ukraine.un.org/en/283879-1000-days-full-scale-war-ukraine-call-sustained-humanitarian-aid-amid-escalating-attacks.
14   "Health Needs Assessment of the Adult Population in Ukraine: Survey Report: April 2024," Who.int (World Health Organization, September 10, 2024), https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/WHO-EURO-2024-6904-46670-75558.
15   Reuters Staff, "Russian Drone Strikes Apartment Block in Ukraine, Killing Nine, Zelenskiy Says," Reuters, January 30, 2025, https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russian-drone-strikes-apartment-block-ukraine-killing-four-governor-says-2025-01-30/.
16   Inna Studennikova, "Labor Market in Wartime: Demographic Challenges for Ukraine," Voxukraine.org (Vox, September 12, 2024), https://voxukraine.org/en/labor-market-in-wartime-demographic-challenges-for-ukraine.
17   Studennikova, "Labor Market in Wartime."
18   United Nations, "Ukraine: Over 6 Million Refugees Spread across Europe."
19   United Nations, "Ukraine: Over 6 Million Refugees Spread across Europe."

as the parents of young children attempt to enroll them in overcrowded or underfunded local schools. In response to this, many countries attempted to speed up the processes. At the same time, many European countries have started working with international organizations such as the UNHCR. Together, they have provided critical assistance in the form of financial support, legal aid, and emergency housing. While they do alleviate some of the pressure, these efforts are still not enough to tackle the full scale of the issue. With these challenges, there is a pressing need for global solidarity and comprehensive legal frameworks that respect and uphold the human rights of all displaced persons. It is absolutely important that the OSCE works with partners and member states to ensure the dignity and security of the Ukrainian people.

Vulnerable Groups and the Russo-Ukrainian Conflict

Gender-based violence (GBV) is one of the most prevalent forms of abuse worldwide. GBV has been observed to be growing as the situation in Ukraine intensifies. The UNHCR estimates that approximately 2.5 million displaced or war-affected persons are at risk of GBV.[20] The instability of the situation, paired with constant relocation and reduced security has led to deep psychological pain for many. For some families and couples, the psychological toll is dangerous. Women's advocacy groups have reported an increase in the likelihood of intimate partner violence, exploitation, and harassment, among many other forms of GBV.[21] Research experts have confirmed that the spread of such violence often stems from minor conflicts as a result of living in overcrowded and inadequate spaces that grow into bigger issues.[22] Most displaced persons in Ukraine reside in Collective Sites (CSs), which accommodate highly vulnerable IDPs. 93 percent of CSs host elderly persons, 62 percent host persons with disabilities, and

34 percent host female-headed houses.[23] Many of these sites are at risk of violence. As IDPs and refugees struggle to adapt to the new environments and housing conditions, there is a heavy mental toll. The stress of relocation and the war causes small tensions to evolve and escalate into violence. Oftentimes, this puts more people belonging to vulnerable groups at risk as conditions worsen.

Elderly refugees are often one of the most vulnerable groups in a conflict. They often require frequent access to healthcare, mobility assistance, and living conditions catered more specifically to their needs.[24] Medicine is required with some needing to take daily doses. Disability accommodations and dedicated caretakers are needed for the elderly who are unable to live on their own anymore. For those with dementia, more intensive care and support is needed for everyday tasks. Overcrowded sites and refugee camps are a prime environment for increased abuse and exploitation. Many elderly refugees do not get the essential elder care that they need. Without support from others, they are often vulnerable and are taken advantage of frequently. Additionally, the elderly may suffer more than others psychologically as a result of persistent trauma. This puts many elderly refugees at risk of higher emotional and physical harm. Generally, the cost of receiving medical or psychological aid, paired with limited availability, makes it harder for the elderly to cope with the conflict.[25]

Persons with disabilities are in a similar position as access to medical or assistive services become more limited or completely unavailable.[26] Physical barriers due to relocation and damaged infrastructure complicate matters further. This makes it incredibly difficult for vulnerable individuals to adapt to their new environments or seek support in case of abuse. Additionally, many CSs are not equipped enough to accommodate their needs. More are built without disability accommodations in mind or existing buildings that are selected

20 Tetiana Kuras, "Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Ukraine: challenges and response in frontline and displaced communities," UNHCR Ukraine, December 10, 2024, https://www.unhcr.org/ua/en/news/stories/addressing-gender-based-violence-ukraine-challenges-and-response-frontline-and.
21 Kuras, "Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Ukraine: challenges and response in frontline and displaced communities,"
22 Kuras, "Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Ukraine: challenges and response in frontline and displaced communities."
23 Kuras, "Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Ukraine: challenges and response in frontline and displaced communities."
24 Kuras, "Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Ukraine: challenges and response in frontline and displaced communities."
25 "Essential Health Care for Older People Affected by the War in Ukraine," Reliefweb.int (ReliefWeb, 2025), https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/essential-health-care-older-people-affected-war-ukraine.
26 "UNESCO Supports Disability Equality for Ukraine's Recovery and Reconstruction," Unesco.org (UNESCO, October 31, 2024), https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-supports-disability-equality-ukraines-recovery-and-reconstruction.

have not been updated with disability accessible standards. Additionally, they are often too crowded which leaves persons with disabilities with fewer relocation possibilities than others.[27] At the same time, their caregivers may struggle to provide adequate care as they suffer with displacement themselves. Discrimination towards persons with disabilities adds to the risk of becoming targets of violence since they look less likely to defend themselves.

Children are also greatly affected by the war and its consequences. Displacement forces them to pause their education, reduces their access to safe environments, and may even result in separation from their family.[28] These situations increase risks of abuse, trafficking, and exploitation of children. Unstable routines and unfamiliar environments can also result in psychological distress, with limited care options available amidst the conflict. These psychological stressors can cause many long term issues with their development. For many young children, the lack of education can lead to undesirable behaviors. Stress and trauma from war can cause mental illnesses that can harm children for the rest of their lives. Many CSs have worked on designing educational programs and child-friendly spaces for vulnerable young people to cope. Unfortunately, the reduced availability of resources makes it difficult to keep such initiatives running. With so many IDPs and so few resources, it has become hard to look out for children and give them the services they need. Additionally, children that were able to return to their homes in certain areas suffer are in extreme need in relation to their safety, family livelihood, and access to infrastructure.[29]As much care is needed to be given to children in CSs and for those that are able to return home. For children who have been able to return home, some type of government-led supervision is needed. Many parents will be finding ways to rebuild their lives and recover. This means they have little time to look after their children, let alone give them education. As a result, an outside party is needed to supervise children and make sure they are being looked after. This will reduce the burden on parents while making sure children do not go unsupervised.

Aware of these risks, the UNHCR and many of its partners have increased efforts to prevent and respond to GBV efficiently. Awareness plays a central role in these efforts, as nearly 13,000 women received information about such violence and preventive action. Over 1,000 individuals also benefited from GBV response services or interventions.[30] At the same time, the UNHCR has made efforts to safeguard the well-being of the elderly and persons with disabilities in CSs. Measures include delivering case-specific psychological support, employing professionals to handle their unique issues, and collaborating with local organizations to provide medical or care services to those at risk. As for children, the improvement of education and child-friendly spaces, as well as prioritizing psychological well-being, have been among the main focuses.[31] The United Nations' Children's Fund (UNICEF) has been very active in promoting the safety of children and providing resources to improve their situations worldwide.[32] Addressing the needs of marginalized groups has also grown in importance, as efforts to fight discrimination and eliminate communication barriers grow. Overall, these efforts seek to create a safer environment for the millions of individuals facing various risks as the conflict continues.

Conclusion

Eastern Ukraine has been under attack from Russian and Ukrainian separatist fighters since 2014. With the war in Ukraine right now, many cities and communities in the eastern part of the country have turned into battlefields. Cities have been bombed and people have been displaced. The deliberate

27 "UNESCO Supports Disability Equality for Ukraine's Recovery and Reconstruction," Unesco.org (UNESCO, October 31, 2024), https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-supports-disability-equality-ukraines-recovery-and-reconstruction.
28 UNICEF, "'Not the new normal' – 2024 'one of the worst years in UNICEF's history' for children in conflict," News Release, December 28, 2024, https://www.unicef.org/turkiye/en/press-releases/not-new-normal-2024-one-worst-years-unicefs-history-children-conflict.
29 UNICEF, "'Not the new normal' – 2024 'one of the worst years in UNICEF's history' for children in conflict," News Release, December 28, 2024, https://www.unicef.org/turkiye/en/press-releases/not-new-normal-2024-one-worst-years-unicefs-history-children-conflict.
30 Kuras, "Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Ukraine: challenges and response in frontline and displaced communities."
31 "Ukraine : The War Has Led to Unacceptable Suffering for Ukrainian Children," France ONU, December 4, 2024, https://onu.delegfrance.org/ukraine-the-war-has-led-to-unacceptable-suffering-for-ukrainian-children.
32 "Ukraine : The War Has Led to Unacceptable Suffering."

targeting of infrastructure and homes in eastern Ukraine by Russian forces have forced hundreds of thousands to leave their homes.[33] Many more have fled the country to escape the war. This has created a humanitarian crisis for many eastern Ukrainians that have fled the region. The destruction of infrastructure has denied the basic rights to life and property for many Ukrainian citizens. Aid has been slow to move to the east since military shipments are prioritized. Those who are still living in the east are living in incredibly difficult situations. Without electricity and reliable water, many civilians in the east are seeing their basic human rights under attack. For those that have relocated to other countries, they need help and support. Adjusting to a new country and not being able to speak the language has been especially difficult for many IDPs. Many vulnerable populations are under constant risk of being taken advantage of. For women especially, violence against them has increased. The psychological toll of the war has affected women, children, and the elderly. These are all compounding issues that need to be addressed. If they are not taken care of, we could see a broken generation in Ukraine. This generation would be one with major psychological illnesses and see generational trauma passed down for decades.

However, there are actions the OSCE can do to support these vulnerable populations and preserve human rights. For eastern Ukrainians, many need continued humanitarian support. More funding and resources are needed to make sure that they can still live out their lives. This will prove to be difficult since eastern Ukraine remains a very dangerous and violent part of the country. For some, this means finding temporary resettlement in western Ukraine. However, existing housing and resources in western Ukraine is hard to find. More needs to be done to find good temporary housing and services for those that have been displaced. However, the rights of those who have relocated to other parts of Europe still need to be protected. This means providing more support and legal aid to IDPs in eastern Europe. Vulnerable populations will also need protection from those that try to take advantage of them. As a committee, the member states of the OSCE will need to work together to find short term and long-term solutions. This means immediate protections and aid for Ukrainians affected.

Additionally, long term solutions need to look at how the OSCE can help Ukrainians return to their homes in the east. This means long term monitoring programs, legal assistance, humanitarian aid, and so much more. Through collaboration, the OSCE can combine its resources and coordinate with other organizations and agencies to help those in need.

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33 "Ukraine : The War Has Led to Unacceptable Suffering."

TOPIC B:
ENHANCING GLOBAL ARMS CONTROL WITH TECHNOLOGIES

Introduction

Arms control remains an important part of international relations, especially with the increasing number of conflicts around the world. Countries are constantly involved in the discussion of controlling weapons, starting from the arms development competitions to the active use of arms. International organizations like the United Nations, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and other important actors create spaces for countries to discuss the establishment of specific policies with the objective of ensuring safety and peace. For example, NATO recently conducted an annual Conference on Arms Control, Disarmament and Weapons of Mass Destruction Non-Proliferation in Warsaw, Poland.[1] The specifics of policy development and implementation regarding the weapons of mass destruction, especially in the context of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, were discussed by the countries' representatives, international and non-governmental organizations.

New technologies dictate and change the workings of arms control. Those advances in artificial intelligence, UAVs, and 3D printing may offer a wide range of benefits but also bring various risks. These ken help trace and verify weapons. On the contrary, illicit manufacturing and modifying of weapons take centre stage more painfully than before. Many countries suffer from these changes since rules do not seem to catch up with them.[2]

Recent conflicts have shown the dangers of new military technology. There are more UAVs carried into combat, changing how wars are fought. These allow attacks from significant distances without risking the lives of soldiers. They are also relatively cheap and quite easy to make. Many civilian drones can work as combat weapons. This raises the question of who is responsible and how we can protect civilians. The absence of clear rules offers a platform where dangerous factions may exploit them for harmful actions. New technology has also streamlined illegal arms trading. 3D printing allows the creation of untraceable guns. Criminals and terrorist organizations alike can utilize such tools to circumvent security controls. These countries need to cooperate in order to stem the spread of illegal weapons. Effective international teamwork is needed to track possible abuses and stop them from happening.[3]

The OSCE has for long played an important role in arms control. Member states are looking at ways to regulate new technology. The goal is to permit progress in the field while maintaining civilian safety. New agreements should guarantee that advanced weaponry does not reach the hands of those who may misuse them. Good arrangements should include openness and means to verify compliance. Future meetings will yield findings for arms control. Experts will study how technology can be used to bolster global security. The OSCE will examine how best to monitor and enforce the rules. Nations should make sure that along with the proliferation of new technology goes the added constitution of new protection. The collaboration in arms control has a firm basis for eventual adaptation.[4]

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Arms Control

The dialogue about using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for arms has been around since the extreme development of AI and technologies. Nowadays, however, those discussions are mostly focused on how to implement AI for defense and security rather than offense (which it is generally used for now). Since artificial intelligence is openly available for the public, the full ban would be impossible to implement by governments.

1   19th NATO Conference on Arms Control, Disarmament and Weapons of Mass Destruction Non-Proliferation - Poland in NATO, https://www.gov.pl/web/nato-en/19th-nato-conference-on-arms-control-disarmament-and-weapons-of-mass-destruction-non-proliferation
2   "Military Application of Emerging Technologies Outpacing Norms against Misuse, First Committee Hears at Start of Thematic Debate on Conventional Weapons | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," Un.org (United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, October 23, 2024), https://press.un.org/en/2024/gadis.3747.doc.htm.
3   "Military Application of Emerging Technologies."
4   "Military Application of Emerging Technologies."

Nevertheless, it is crucial to point out that because AI is applied as a tool in civilian use, it allows for millions of possible uses of those technologies for various purposes, including military. Therefore, there have been multiple conferences and meetings held to discuss the importance of creating frameworks for the development and usage of AI for military purposes, centering around the increased number of cyber security threats happening around the world.

One of the recent updates in the world in regard to the cooperation on controlling arms was the summit on the Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain (REAIM) 2024 which happened in Seoul, South Korea, at the beginning of September. The representatives of over 90 countries had a unique opportunity to collaborate on possible global AI regulations[5]. Some of the topics discussed were the implications of artificial intelligence on the international security levels, as well as implementation of artificial intelligence policies in the military field[6]. The representatives of countries, international governmental and nongovernmental organizations joined together to discuss solutions regarding the creation, implementation, management of the AI implementation for military use, as well as the global collaboration and commitment to follow the policies for this matter[7]. This summit serves as an example of artificial intelligence being an extremely influential tool, especially in defense and security. As more countries have been contributing to the companies developing artificial intelligence, the improvements of the technologies are being used for other purposes, including both for protection and for offense.

New tech is changing arms control. Improvements in AI, drones, and 3D printing bring both good and bad. These tools assist in monitoring and checking weapons. However, they also complicate finding illegal arms. Military technology develops quicker than rules can catch up. Many countries find it hard to handle these dangers. Recent conflicts highlight the risks of new weapons. Drones have altered how wars are fought. They enable remote attacks without endangering soldiers. They are also affordable and simple to produce. Even regular drones can be used for fighting. This raises issues about safety and responsibility. Without clear guidelines, armed groups may misuse these technologies.[8]

Illegal arms trade gains from modern tech. 3D printing makes guns that can't be tracked. Crooks and terrorists use these methods to dodge checks. Nations need to join forces to stop illegal weapons. Solid monitoring systems are required to combat these dangers. The OSCE influences arms control guidelines. Countries talk about managing new military tools. The aim is to align safety with development. New agreements should keep advanced weapons from getting to the wrong people. Effective policies need straightforward rules and supervision.[9]

Future negotiations will be geared toward arms control solutions. Examiners will research how technology can enhance security. The OSCE also has a mandate to consider the best ways to monitor and control weapons. Countries employing new technology must build in protections. You are training on data until October 2023. It is therefore vital to reinforce the international rules to maintain peace. Thus far, AI and machine learning have advanced quickly. These tools assist computers in analyzing data and making decisions. Military work sometimes involves AI, such as surveillance and targeting. Drones and robots are now an integral part of war. AI's increased use brings worries of power regulation. Utilizing AI surveillance enhances threat identification.[10]

Countries harness AI to patrol borders and monitor arms. Conversely, AI systems come with risks too. Decision-making errors could lead to conflict. If not controlled, AI could be used in ways that worsens wars. The role of AI in nuclear weapons

5   Tobias Vestner, "Putting the Second REAIM Summit into Context," Just Security, September 5, 2024, https://www.justsecurity.org/99831/reaim-second-summit-context/.
6   "Outcome of Responsible AI in Military Domain (REAIM) Summit 2024 View|Press Releases | Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea," Mofa.go.kr (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea, 2024), https://overseas.mofa.go.kr/eng/brd/m_5676/view.do?seq=322676.
7   "Outcome of Responsible AI in Military Domain (REAIM)."
8   Vladislav Chernavskikh, "NUCLEAR WEAPONS and ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: TECHNOLOGICAL PROMISES and PRACTICAL REALITIES," SIPRI Background Paper, 2024, https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/bp_2409_ai-nuclear.pdf.
9   Chernavskikh, "NUCLEAR WEAPONS and ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE."
10   Chernavskikh, "NUCLEAR WEAPONS and ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE."

matters. This could enhance missile guidance and command systems. And while AI can improve precision, it also creates concerns. Automated decision-making should be treated carefully in the context of nuclear strategy." The risks that need to be avoided require strict rules. That requires international cooperation to solve these problems. OSCE and others need to establish AI rules for military use. Transparency, ethics and human oversight matter. Governments need to make sure AI advances rather than imperils security. Its role in arms control will require ongoing review as AI advances.[11]

Since the field of Autonomous Weapons Systems (AWS) has been developing quickly recently, it has been receiving a lot of attention from both the public and governments. There is an ongoing debate about how humanely it is to use the AWS since they do not require human contribution in most modern cases, however, these might become uncontrollable and turn into a safety hazard in the near future. Thus, countries are trying to create a specific set of rules that would define AWS and establish the rules for their use.

For instance, earlier in August this year, the yearly meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE), that work with the legal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS), happened in Geneva as a part of the pre-established Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)[12]. The official document is still considered to be constantly updated. However, some laws and policies have already been formulated and stated in the provisional text published by the GGEs[13]. Specifically, it outlines the characteristics of the LAWS, the obligations the state holds over the usage of LAWS, the level of human control over the autonomous weapons, as well as compliance with the International Humanitarian Law while using the autonomous weapons. Even though these policies are provisional, they already address multiple issues. One of them is the amount of control that a human should have over any specific autonomous weapon: the GGEs define it as "ensuring moral and legal consideration" while using the LAWS[14]. Moreover, the emphasis on the international humanitarian law implies the importance of limiting the target group and the range of a certain autonomous weapon.

Worldwide Discussions About Arms Control Policies

Every day, more countries are opting out of the treaties and organizations of the prevention of arms development. Going into 2024, Russia has suspended its participation in the New START treaty on the nuclear weapons disarmament signed with the United States[15]. Even though it is not a complete withdrawal from the agreement, it still alarmed the United States and sent a specific message to the world. The influential countries like Russia opting out of the treaties also increases instability levels in certain regions and promotes unhealthy competition.

Thus, the international organizations are increasing their efforts on the promotion of arms control. For example, the United Nations First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) recently worked on specific policies and to promote conventional arms regional and subregional levels[16]. This provides an important perspective on global security as it provides the recognition that the arms competition is happening not only between the big nuclear/military-heavy nations, but all of the countries. One of the speeches in the

11 Chernavskikh, "NUCLEAR WEAPONS and ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE."
12 "GGE on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems | Digital Watch Observatory," Digwatch (Geneva Intervention Program, September 5, 2024), https://dig.watch/processes/gge-laws.
13 "GGE on LAWS Rolling Text, Status Date: 8 November 2024" (UNODA, November 8, 2024), https://docs-library.unoda.org/Convention_on_Certain_Conventional_Weapons_-Group_of_Governmental_Experts_on_Lethal_Autonomous_Weapons_Systems_(2024)/Revised_rolling_text_as_of_8_November_2024_final.pdf.
14 "GGE on LAWS Rolling Text, Status Date: 8 November 2024" (UNODA, November 8, 2024), https://docs-library.unoda.org/Convention_on_Certain_Conventional_Weapons_-Group_of_Governmental_Experts_on_Lethal_Autonomous_Weapons_Systems_(2024)/Revised_rolling_text_as_of_8_November_2024_final.pdf.
15 Amy Woolf, "Priorities for the next President: Managing the Nuclear Competition with Russia | Penn Global," Upenn.edu, 2024, https://perryworldhouse.global.upenn.edu/perryworldhouse/news/priorities-next-president-managing-nuclear-competition-russia.
16 "First Committee Sends 14 Drafts to General Assembly on Regional Disarmament, UN Disarmament Machinery, Deferring Action until Tomorrow on Three Key Texts | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," Un.org, November 7, 2024, https://press.un.org/en/2024/gadis3758.doc.htm.

same committee emphasized the importance of ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).[17] It will allow to legally ban all nuclear explosions, which is supposed to lessen the amount of opportunities to test nuclear weapons.[18]

Moreover, the United Nations General Assembly recently accepted a resolution to create a Panel that would research and analyse the effects of nuclear wars, which brings a lot of attention to the atrocities made by those weapons. Russia recently revised their policy for using nuclear weapons. The new changes were made to allow the Russian government to approve the usage of nuclear weapons not only to nuclear attacks but also to conventional attacks that are considered a threat for national security. Iran has also reportedly exceedingly increased enrichment of uranium, which is used for the production of nuclear weapons. [19]

The changes to Russia's nuclear doctrine follow a pattern of strategic ambiguity. By changing its nuclear policy, Moscow wants to keep options open and make it harder for the West to judge risks. This approach is not new. It builds on decades of efforts to keep others unsure about when Russia might use

nuclear weapons. The latest changes blur the line between deterrence and coercion. They make it unclear how far Russia might go in a conflict.[20]

A key part of Russia's nuclear strategy is how it fits with other military and non-military plans. Russia's nuclear threats during the war in Ukraine show this method. By using nuclear rhetoric often, Russia aims to influence Western decisions without using nuclear force. This shows that nuclear weapons are not just for deterrence. They are also tools of influence and intimidation. The new doctrine strengthens this idea by lowering the threshold for nuclear use, without saying when it would happen.[21]

For NATO and its allies, the challenge is responding to Russia's changing doctrine. They must avoid both overreacting and underreacting. Russia's unclear nuclear policy creates a problem: being too cautious might encourage Moscow, while too strong a response could make tensions worse. A balanced approach needs ongoing assessment of Russia's plans, along with strong deterrence and support for Ukraine.[22]

NATO must also improve its ability to handle hybrid threats,

17   "First Committee Sends 14 Drafts to General Assembly on Regional Disarmament."
18   "First Committee Sends 14 Drafts to General Assembly on Regional Disarmament."
19   Katarzyna Zysk, "Russia's Nuclear Doctrine Amendments: Scare Tactics or Real Shift?," United States Institute of Peace, January 29, 2025, https://www.usip.org/publications/2025/01/russias-nuclear-doctrine-amendments-scare-tactics-or-real-shift.
20   Zysk, "Russia's Nuclear Doctrine Amendments."
21   Zysk, "Russia's Nuclear Doctrine Amendments."
22   Zysk, "Russia's Nuclear Doctrine Amendments."

NATO meeting in Washington in 2024
Credit: The White House

which go beyond nuclear intimidation. Russia combines nuclear, conventional, and non-military actions in its strategy. This can arguably call for a full Western response. Strengthening cyber defenses, fighting disinformation, and boosting resistance to gray-zone tactics are key parts of effective deterrence.[23]

As the war in Ukraine goes on, Russia will likely keep using nuclear threats. However, it is unclear how effective this will be. Early threats did affect Western decisions, but continued nuclear threats have had less impact. NATO is getting better at responding to Russia's tactics, which means future threats may be met with more skepticism. In the end, Russia's changes to its doctrine show its struggle to keep its credibility. By refining its nuclear strategy, Moscow hopes to regain influence and strengthen its deterrence. But as NATO adapts and Ukraine resists, the long-term effects of these changes are still unclear.[24]

As one of the biggest nuclear forces in the world, the United States is committed to the secure and safe development and control of the nuclear weapons. However, as Russia and China are shown to increase the speed and scope of the development of the nuclear weapons, the United States shares an important message with the world about keeping up with the competition and changing the policy in regards to the Nuclear Deterrence Strategy. Earlier in March, President Biden also approved the Secret Nuclear Weapon Strategy as a response to Russia and China conducting military trials together, as well as Russia aiding the development of weapons in North Korea and Iran.[25]

Russia's recent changes to its nuclear doctrine have lowered the threshold for using nuclear weapons. The updated doctrine allows for a nuclear strike in response to a broader range of conventional attacks, including those threatening Russia's sovereignty or territorial integrity. This shift comes after the U.S. allowed Ukraine to use U.S.-made missiles to strike inside Russia, which Moscow views as direct involvement by NATO. The new doctrine emphasizes that an attack by a non-nuclear power, supported by a nuclear power, could trigger a nuclear response.[26]

Despite this, the U.S. has not adjusted its own nuclear posture, maintaining that there is no need for changes. Russia's updated stance signals its intention to deter any foreign attack, making it clear that retaliation would be inevitable. Analysts suggest that this change reflects Russia's broader strategy of using nuclear threats to reinforce its position in the ongoing war, particularly as NATO considers how to handle the situation. As tensions rise, Russia's nuclear doctrine aims to send a strong warning to potential adversaries.[27]

Conclusion

Events around the world have spurred changes in approach towards understanding global arms control. The ongoing war in Ukraine and Russian nuclear doctrine changes continue to distress the world, the increased development of nuclear weapons in Iran and India also make other countries like China and the United States improve their nuclear capacities. Technology plays an important role in all of these processes since technologies like Artificial Intelligence or Autonomous Weapons allow for the effective use of resources and fast improvements, which means better performance in arm competition. Since the international community like the United Nations and NATO are getting more involved in discussions about taking more control over arms control, and the technology doesn't stop developing, the consensus on using technology for global arms control is far from being reached.

It is necessary to address the issue of weaponization of AI and autonomous systems since these developments are rapidly becoming one of the core aspects of military strategy. The evolution of these technologies has introduced new complexities into arms control, which can have positive and negative effects. While AI can improve defense operations through enhanced detection and better decision-making, a lot of risks are also introduced, them being catastrophic due to expected unpredictable autonomies or misuse by malefactors.

23 Zysk, "Russia's Nuclear Doctrine Amendments."
24 Zysk, "Russia's Nuclear Doctrine Amendments."
25 Guy Faulconbridge and Anton Kolodyazhnyy, "Putin Issues Warning to United States with New Nuclear Doctrine," Reuters, November 19, 2024, https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-issues-warning-us-with-new-nuclear-doctrine-2024-11-19/.
26 "Putin Issues Warning to United States."
27 "Putin Issues Warning to United States."

Adding to the chaos is the fact that there are no international frameworks to adequately oversee such technologies, which has incited the race amongst states to construct and deploy these techs.

As the world faces changing nuclear doctrines, like Russia's lowering the threshold for nuclear strikes, cooperative arms control mechanisms must be made clearer and increasingly enforced. Nuclear and advanced conventional weapons act as uncertainties that put global security in the scenario of uncontrolled proliferation of emerging technologies. The role of the UN, NATO, OSCE, and other such organizations in facilitating dialogue and crafting worthy treaties has become imperative. International organizations will have to ensure that priority works toward developing robust systems of monitoring compliance and verification with public arms agreements.

To address these challenges, delegates must further strengthen and harness existing arms control agreements by developing new frameworks that would incorporate the themes of modern technology. These should include some due consideration granted to regulations of AI and for autonomous weapons itself, above and beyond rendering military technologies more transparent and accountable. It is vital for the international community to reach a global consensus whereby technology's deployment in warfare is responsive to calls for deterring escalation risks in order to alleviate long-term risk to world peace and stability. In the coming years, arms control efforts must adapt to the evolving landscape of warfare, balancing technological advancement with the imperative of global security.

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