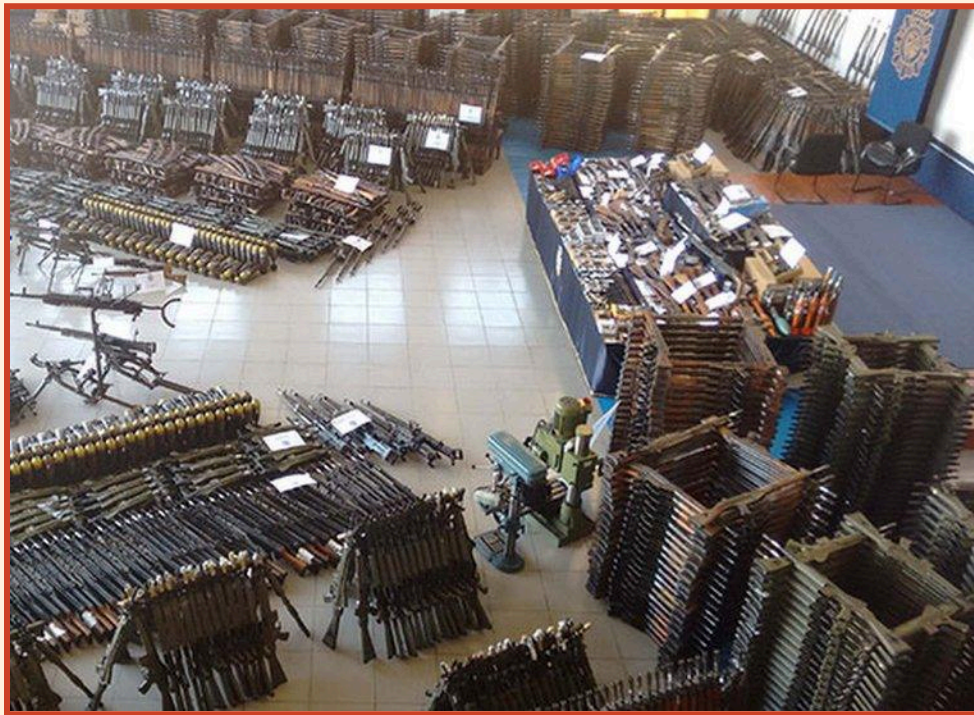


DISEC:

Managing the Stockpiling of Conventional Weapons



39th Annual Model United Nations Conference at St. John's High School

By William Berger '27 and Sam LaGrone '29

Table of Contents



<i>Letter From the Chairs:</i>	2
<i>History of the problem</i>	3
<i>Statement of the Problem</i>	5
<i>Possible Solutions</i>	8
<i>Bloc Positions</i>	12
<i>Bloc 1: Strong Enforcement of International Standards</i>	12
<i>Bloc 2: Sovereignty and Non-Intervention</i>	12
<i>Bloc 3: Developing Nations</i>	13
<i>Bloc 4: High Impact/Conflict-Affected</i>	14
<i>Bloc 5: Neutral Swing States</i>	14
<i>Bibliography</i>	16

Letter From the Chair:

Dear Delegates,

My name is William Berger and I am a senior at St. John's. DISEC is the largest (and the best) committee at SJMUNC so it will be a lot of fun and Sam and I are super excited to see all of you guys there. I have been a part of MUN since freshman year and I have gone to three National Conferences throughout my time at St. John's. I co-chaired with Co-president Aryan Modi last year at SJMUNC however this is my first time chairing. I also have experience in St. John's Middle School MUN where I oversaw and ran a committee throughout the year.

A few things about me outside of MUN is that I love to play soccer, golf, basketball and practically anything under the sun that involves hanging out with my friends. I am also a member of clubs like DECA, Mock Trial, Speech and Debate, and more which all foster my love and interest in Business, Finance, and Law leading to my path of planning to study Economics in college.

I'm sure for many of you it will be your first time in a MUN conference and if so my goal is to ensure that you have a ton of fun but also learn as much as possible. I'm sure you've been to a couple weekly meetings at school but this is a truly immersive experience where you will find out whether or not you love MUN. On the other hand, for those of you who have been to a conference before you may have heard of DISEC or been a part of a DISEC committee so that is exactly why this is a very unique approach to DISEC. We tried to find a fun and interesting topic that is very atypical to the normal nuclear war type of topics that your average DISEC will have and I hope that you guys enjoy reading our paper and find the topic interesting and unfamiliar. I

know that prior to researching it, stockpiling of weapons was not a topic I knew anything about and I have grown to be truly fascinated by the subject and I wish the same to you delegates.

Good luck with your research and have a ton of fun while learning about this topic. If it's your first time doing MUN, don't be nervous, it will be a ton of fun just be yourself and try to put yourself in situations where you are uncomfortable. If you have any questions, or just want to talk about anything at all, please reach out to me at bergew27@stjohnshigh.org.

Sincerely,

William Berger '27

History of the Problem:

The history behind conventional weapons stockpiling is extremely difficult to pinpoint and takes many forms. For the sake of our sanity and in order to condense this topic into a more modern viewpoint, we will simply focus on the stockpiling of modern weapons: guns. It is quite unclear when the stockpiling of guns occurred because, at a local level, it was extremely uncommon to disclose to the public that you were hoarding thousands of weapons in your house. However, we can conclude that they must have begun at a much larger scale in the 18th-19th centuries, during the world's industrial era. At this time, mass production of guns began, leading to greater stockpiling.

In wartime, stockpiling can be seen in a much more vibrant light. An infamous example of this dates back to the American Revolutionary War era, specifically the first battle of the War: the Battle of Lexington and Concord. This specific battle broke out due to the Massachusetts Militia's stockpiling of weapons, which posed a threat to the British, and as a result, the British sought to take control of it. Another key example of weapon stockpile management during later years is in the Civil War. John Brown attempted to rally as many enslaved men as he could to revolt. The basis behind their revolt was that they would break into a gun stockpile and steal all the weapons. However, their plan was foiled in two ways: firstly, there weren't enough enslaved men attempting to revolt, but secondly, there was proper protection of the stockpile, and the U.S. Marines shut them down. Both such events illustrate a simple truth: weapons are tokens of power and whoever is able to secure the store of weapons, guarantees power and control of the status quo.

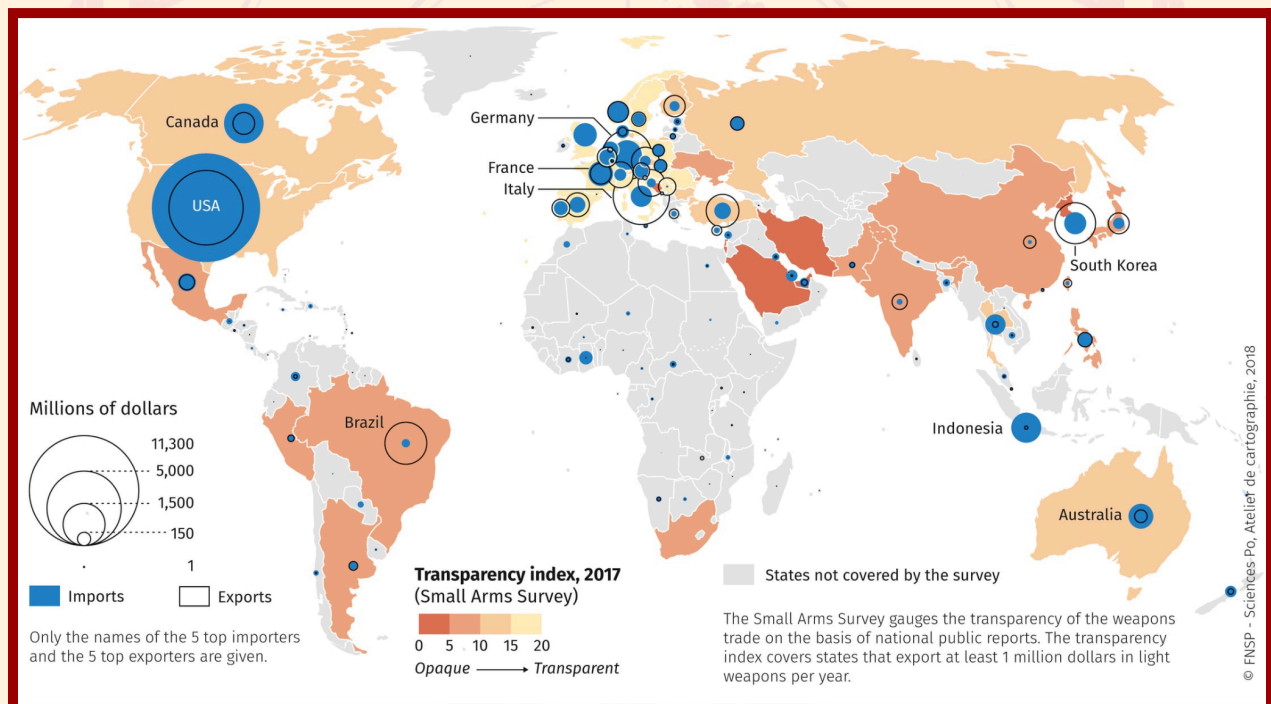
One of the largest cases of poor stockpile management is from the Post-Cold War Era. As a result of the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union, there were many poorly secured stockpiles left across Europe. In Ukraine alone, an estimated 32 billion dollars USD in military assets disappeared between 1992 and 1998, largely due to weapons being stolen from these stockpiles. Most significantly, in the current context, we can see how poorly managed stockpiles continue to pose a major security threat, particularly in regions affected by organized crime. Holding weapons in large quantities is storage efficient and easy to retrieve, but also concentrates the risk of the weapons being stolen. Drug cartels often exploit weak security, corruption, and inadequate oversight to steal or purchase weapons diverted from government stockpiles. These firearms significantly increase the cartels' firepower, allowing them to expand their influence, intensify violence, and grow their organizations to the steep slope of crime they have climbed to now, controlling their own regions.

The issue became even more apparent after major wars came to an end. When a war ends, the weapons do not simply disappear with the fighting. Instead, thousands, sometimes millions, of guns and rounds of ammunition can be left behind with nobody to properly control them. A key example of this occurred following the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s. With the collapse of Yugoslavia and the end of the fighting, enormous numbers of weapons remained scattered throughout the region. Many of these weapons eventually found their way into the hands of criminals and other groups. This created a problem that extended far beyond the war itself: even when the fighting stopped, the weapons that had fueled it could continue to cause instability for years to come.

As the international community began to recognize the dangers of these weapons, efforts were made to create better systems for controlling them. The United Nations took a major step in 2001 with the creation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. This program encouraged countries to take greater responsibility for their weapons, including improving the security of stockpiles, keeping better records, and destroying weapons that were no longer needed. These measures represented an important shift in how the world viewed conventional weapons. Rather than simply focusing on the weapons being used in war, countries began to recognize that what happened to a weapon while sitting in a warehouse could be just as important as what happened to it on a battlefield. However, despite these efforts, many countries still lack the resources or stability necessary to properly protect their stockpiles.

Today, the problem has become even more difficult to contain because weapons can travel across borders with remarkable ease. A gun stolen from a government warehouse in one country can eventually end up in the hands of a criminal organization thousands of miles away. Corruption only makes this issue worse, as those responsible for protecting stockpiles may sometimes become involved in the illegal sale or diversion of weapons themselves. Furthermore, guns do not simply become useless with age; a weapon produced decades ago can still be used today. This means that a stockpile created for one war can continue to influence conflicts and criminal activity long after that war has ended. The problem, therefore, is no longer simply about keeping weapons in a warehouse. It is about maintaining control over a weapon from the moment it is produced until the moment it is permanently removed from circulation.

Weapons, throughout human history, have often proved to make the difference in disputes over land, politics, or ideology. In the right hands, they uphold order; in the wrong hands, they uproot it. Now more than ever, with weapons becoming more lethal and destructive than ever seen before, the thoroughness and vigilance of stockpiling becomes pivotal for our race.



Statement of the Problem:

Today, weapons stockpiling is a major security concern because of the extreme difficulty of properly managing the enormous number of weapons held by governments around the world. Countries stockpile weapons for many legitimate reasons, including national defense, military readiness, and preparing for possible future conflicts. However, problems begin to occur when governments do not have the proper systems in place to keep track of, secure, maintain, and eventually dispose of these weapons. When these systems are weak, weapons can become lost, stolen, illegally sold, or diverted to people and organizations that were never supposed to have access to them.

One of the biggest problems surrounding conventional weapons stockpiling is the lack of consistent security and management between countries. Some governments have the funding, technology, and trained personnel necessary to closely monitor their stockpiles, while others do not have the same resources. This can lead to poorly protected storage facilities, inaccurate records, and weapons being left without proper supervision. This problem can become even more serious in countries experiencing political instability, corruption, or conflict—thereby triggering a vicious cycle where weapons fall into the wrong hands within unsafe countries, and pose even greater threats to safety. The United Nations has recognized the importance of proper stockpile management and encourages states to improve physical security, record-keeping, and inventory systems in order to prevent weapons from being diverted into illegal circulation.

Another issue is the large number of weapons that eventually become outdated or unnecessary. Although this issue is often overlooked because it is less dangerous, it is actually

extremely important. Governments have to decide whether these weapons should remain in storage, be transferred, or be destroyed and keeping unnecessary weapons can create additional financial and security responsibilities. At the same time, destroying weapons and ammunition can be expensive and dangerous if countries do not have the proper facilities or technology. Aging ammunition can also become unstable and create serious risks for military personnel, civilians, and the environment surrounding storage facilities. Because of this, countries need reliable systems for determining which weapons are still necessary and safely disposing of those that are no longer useful. Otherwise, countries will illegally dispose of these weapons and cause them to fall into the hands of unintended parties.

Most significantly, the consequences of poor stockpile management can extend far beyond the location where the weapons are stored. When conventional weapons are diverted from legal government stockpiles, they can enter illegal weapons markets and eventually reach organized crime groups, terrorist organizations, insurgent groups, and other unauthorized actors. These groups can use these weapons to increase their ability to commit violence, expand their operations, and challenge the authority of governments. Since weapons can be transported across borders, the effects of poor stockpile management in one country can create security problems for neighboring countries and entire regions.

Therefore, the main problem facing the international community is finding a way to improve the management of conventional weapons stockpiles without interfering with the legitimate defense needs of individual states. Countries must find ways to improve the security of storage facilities, accurately track weapons throughout their lifespan, safely dispose of

unnecessary weapons, and prevent weapons from entering illegal markets. At the same time, countries with fewer resources may need financial, technological, and logistical assistance from the international community to meet these standards. The challenge for this committee is to develop realistic solutions that improve the security and accountability of conventional weapons stockpiles while still respecting the sovereignty and national security needs of each member state.



Possible Solutions:

There are many possible ways that countries can begin to solve the issue of conventional weapon stockpiling, but the most important thing to understand is that there is not one singular solution that will completely fix the problem. Every country has different assets available to it for addressing the problem at hand. Because of this, the goal should not be to force every country to manage its weapons in exactly the same way, but rather to create basic standards that every country can realistically follow. These standards should focus on three main areas: protecting weapons, keeping track of weapons, and safely discarding weapons that are no longer needed.

One of the easiest places to begin is by improving the security of military stockpiles. Countries should be encouraged to regularly inspect their storage facilities and make sure that weapons are only accessible to authorized military and government personnel. This could include stronger locks, security cameras, fences, alarms, and better control over who is allowed to enter storage facilities. Countries should also be encouraged to regularly check their inventory and compare the number of weapons physically in a stockpile with the number listed in government records. Although this may seem like a very simple solution, it could prevent many weapons from disappearing without anyone noticing. If a country discovers that weapons are missing, it should be able to investigate where they went before they can be sold or transferred into an illegal weapons market.

Another important solution would be creating better systems for tracking weapons throughout their entire lifespan. When a weapon is produced, purchased, transferred, stored, or eventually destroyed, there should be a record of where it went and which government or

organization was responsible for it. Countries could use digital databases to make this process easier and more accurate. These databases could include information such as the type of weapon, its serial number, where it is stored, and whether it is still considered usable. This would make it much more difficult for weapons to simply disappear from government records. It would also make it easier for countries to determine exactly how many weapons they have and which weapons they actually need.

A third solution would be encouraging countries to regularly remove weapons and ammunition that are no longer necessary. Governments should not continue storing weapons simply because they have already purchased them. If a weapon is outdated, damaged, or no longer needed for national defense, the government should determine whether it should be transferred, destroyed, or recycled. This would be especially important for aging ammunition, which can become dangerous over time. Countries that do not have the facilities or technology necessary to safely destroy these weapons could receive assistance from other countries or international organizations. This would give countries with fewer resources a way to safely reduce their stockpiles instead of leaving dangerous weapons sitting in poorly maintained facilities.

Another possible solution would be increased cooperation between countries. Since weapons can easily cross national borders, one country cannot completely solve the problem by itself. Countries could share information about stolen or missing weapons so that neighboring governments and law enforcement agencies can recognize them if they appear in illegal markets. Countries could also work together to identify common routes used to move illegally diverted

weapons across borders. This would be particularly important in areas where organized crime and terrorist organizations already operate across multiple countries. If one country improves its stockpile security but neighboring countries do not, criminals can simply look for another location with weaker security.

Most significantly, countries with fewer resources should not be expected to solve this problem completely on their own. Some governments may understand the importance of improving their stockpile management but simply do not have the money, equipment, or trained personnel necessary to do so. Wealthier countries and international organizations could provide funding, training, and technology to help these governments improve their storage facilities and tracking systems. This could be done through voluntary international programs where countries request assistance based on their individual needs. By helping countries improve their own systems rather than forcing them to follow one specific model, the international community could improve stockpile security while still respecting the sovereignty of individual states.

Finally, the United Nations could encourage countries to create regular reviews of their conventional weapon stockpiles. These reviews could allow governments to determine whether their weapons are properly secured, whether their records are accurate, and whether certain weapons are old or unnecessary. Countries could voluntarily share the results of these reviews with international organizations in order to receive additional assistance or recommendations. This would create more accountability without requiring countries to publicly reveal sensitive information about their military capabilities. In the end, the goal should not be to eliminate conventional weapon stockpiles, since countries have legitimate reasons to maintain weapons for

their national defense. Instead, the goal should be to make sure that the weapons countries choose to stockpile are properly secured, properly tracked, and eventually disposed of when they are no longer needed.



Bloc Positions:

● **Bloc 1: Strong Enforcement of International Standards**

- United States
- United Kingdom
- France
- Germany
- Canada
- Australia
- Japan
- South Korea
- Netherlands
- Sweden
- Norway
- Denmark
- Finland
- Belgium
- Switzerland

Delegates included in Bloc 1, have a hard task ahead of them. These are prosperous nations, highly regarded and respected for their consistent efforts in enforcing international standards that others might not. These countries' reputation proves strong, but will each individual country's efforts in protecting against unlawful collection, distribution, and poor protection of weapon stockpiles reflect that reputation? International Standards are a route that nations in this bloc would typically be interested in establishing; however, wealthy nations like these must consider nations in different situations and their capacity to comply with standards.

● **Bloc 2: Sovereignty and Non-Intervention**

- Russia
- China
- Iran
- North Korea

- Belarus
- Syria
- Venezuela
- Cuba
- Nicaragua
- Myanmar
- Algeria
- Vietnam
- Laos
- Kazakhstan
- Uzbekistan

If a delegate is included in Bloc 2, a difficult challenge lies ahead. While these nations may support the proper management and protection of conventional weapons, they place a much greater emphasis on national sovereignty and the right of individual states to control their own military stockpiles. International standards may be useful, but how far should the United Nations be allowed to go in enforcing them? As solutions are debated, the balance between international security and national sovereignty must be carefully considered to ensure that international cooperation does not become international interference.

● **Bloc 3: Developing Countries**

- India
- Indonesia
- Pakistan
- Bangladesh
- Malaysia
- Thailand
- Philippines
- Nepal
- Nigeria
- Ghana
- Kenya

- Ethiopia
- Tanzania
- Senegal
- Morocco

Delegates included in Bloc 3 have an overlooked role in this key issue. These nations recognize and may even live the dangers created by poorly secured and outdated weapons stockpiles, yet many face financial, technological, or logistical limitations that can make effective stockpile management difficult. International standards may provide a solution, but implementing those standards requires resources that are not equally available to every nation. As solutions are debated, the question becomes whether wealthier nations and international organizations should provide the funding, technology, and training necessary to help developing states strengthen their stockpile management without placing unrealistic burdens on their governments.

- **Bloc 4: High Impact/Conflict-Affected**

- Ukraine
- Iraq
- Afghanistan
- Libya
- Yemen
- Somalia
- Mali
- Niger
- Chad
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Central African Republic
- South Sudan
- Colombia
- Mexico

- Lebanon

Delegates of Bloc 4 have a specific, unique relationship with this issue. Many delegates in Bloc 4 will have experienced the terrible effects of weapon stockpiling firsthand.. These nations have experienced conflict, political instability, organized crime, or other conditions that can make protecting conventional weapons stockpiles particularly difficult. Poorly secured weapons can quickly become valuable resources for terrorist organizations, insurgent groups, and organized crime, allowing existing conflicts and security threats to grow. As solutions are debated, the focus must remain on strengthening stockpile security, improving weapons tracking, safely destroying unnecessary weapons, and increasing international assistance without undermining the sovereignty of affected states.

- **Bloc 5: Neutral Swing States**

- Brazil
- Argentina
- Chile
- South Africa
- Egypt
- Saudi Arabia
- Türkiye
- Israel
- Qatar
- United Arab Emirates

Delegates in Bloc 5 are wealthy nations with the capacity to wield great power on this issue. What delegates will do with the nation's unique neutral position is extremely important. These nations possess significant regional influence and military capabilities while maintaining

diverse perspectives on international security and weapons management. Although stronger stockpile management can reduce the risk of weapons diversion, excessive international restrictions could interfere with legitimate national defense interests. As solutions are debated, the balance between national security, international cooperation, and responsible weapons management must remain at the forefront, with particular attention given to solutions that can be realistically implemented across different regions and political environments.



Bibliography:

HISTORY.com Editors. "Firearms." *History*. Accessed August 16, 2026.

<https://www.history.com/articles/firearms>.

Kohn, Isabelle. "A Fully Loaded Cultural History of Stockpiling Guns." *MEL Magazine*. Accessed June 28, 2026.

<https://melmagazine.com/en-us/story/a-fully-loaded-cultural-history-of-stockpiling-guns>.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. "OSCE Mission to Moldova." *OSCE*. Accessed July 12, 2026. <https://moldova.osce.org/moldova/124277>.

Small Arms Survey. "Crime, Conflict, Corruption: Global Illicit Small Arms Transfers." *Small Arms Survey 2001: Profiling the Problem*. Accessed June 28, 2026.

<https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/Small-Arms-Survey-2001-Chapter-05-EN.pdf>.

United Nations. "Small Arms Conference Concludes with Consensus Adoption of Action Programme." *United Nations*. Accessed June 28, 2026.

<https://press.un.org/en/2001/dc2795.doc.htm>.

United Nations Digital Library. "1999 Report on Small Arms." *United Nations Digital Library*.

Accessed June 28, 2026. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/477974?ln=en>.

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Addressing the Linkages between Illicit Arms, Organized Crime and Armed Conflict*. Accessed August 16, 2026.

https://www.unodc.org/documents/firearms-protocol/2022/UNIDIR-UNODC_Adressing_the_linkages_between_illicit_arms_organized_crime_and_armed_conflict.pdf.

Sciences Po. “Small Arms Trade, 2012–2016.” *World Atlas of Global Issues*. Accessed September 3, 2026.

<https://espace-mondial-atlas.sciencespo.fr/en/topic-insecuritypeace/map-4C27-EN-small-arms-trade-2012-2016.html>