

Topic Summary

DISEC

Managing the Stockpiling of Modern Weapons

Throughout the world, there is a vast number of conventional weapons that are held in military installations and in government armories and stockpiled due to war aftermath. With poor supervision and control mechanisms, weapons can find their way to terrorists and organized crime syndicates. Improperly maintained or aging ammunition depots are another leading issue behind weapon stockpiling, as they can cause accidental explosions.

This committee will discuss reasons and impacts of excessive stockpiling of conventional weapons, evaluate the existing international framework in the field, as well as ways to make management more effective, enhance accountability, improve security, and cooperate between countries. Delegates will be charged with the task of creating pragmatic and realistic recommendations for reducing dangers connected with weapons stockpiling while taking into consideration the security needs of member states.

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. 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 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. 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.

