

PRAMUN 2017

TOPIC #1: GLOBAL BAN ON THE POSSESSION OF ASSAULT WEAPONS AS A MEANS TO COMBAT TERRORISM

VOCABULARY:

*assault weapon**1 - any of various automatic or semiautomatic firearms with detachable magazines and often other features such as a pistol grip or a collapsible stock, designed for individual use

*terrorism**2 - the use of violence or the threat of violence, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political goals

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Since 2014, the year with the highest number of terrorist attacks in the past 40 years, gun restriction laws have been a very popular topic among all of the Member States. Many feel that making stricter laws is going to decrease the amount of threats and attacks, however, some believe, that it is not the most efficient step to take because fear caused by many factors and not only by terrorism is one of the main reasons why people purchase and own guns in the first place.

UN INVOLVEMENT:

United Nations need to protect civilians against all acts of extremist violence. There are many resolutions, which tackle the problem of weapons of mass destruction, however, not much light has been brought to the more popular issue of assault weapons.

There is a Counter-Terrorism Committee in the Security Council, which has been actively interested so far. It was founded after the events of 9/11 to tackle the problem of insecurity and threats of terrorism. The Security Council adopted three very important resolutions: 1368, 1373 and 1377 after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in which the Members States were encouraged to cooperate and share their intelligence on terrorist groups in order to assist in combating international terrorism.

The United Nations Counter Terrorism Centre (UNCTC) was established in September 2011, to promote international counter-terrorism cooperation as well as to support Member States in the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

BLOC POSITIONS:

There is a huge legislative imbalance between the member states. The opinion on gun ownership and gun laws in general varies a lot depending on each country and its specific culture (sport-shooting and hunting tradition for example). Many value one's right of self-defence.

The European Union's policy is rather restrictive, however, there are exceptions with lesser restrictions such as the Czech Republic or Sweden. United States of America have a very permissive gun policy, as we can see in their constitution, which recognizes an individual right to keep and bear arms. In the year 2007 all American civilians owned 270 million weapons. In Panama essentially all non-fully automatic guns are legal and there are also no magazine capacity restrictions. Indonesia has generally restrictive gun laws, where usually only people who have a profession, where they need a weapon, own one. In Kenya it is illegal to own any type of firearm without a valid gun ownership licence for which anyone older than 12 years old can apply to.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

How has your country responded to terrorism in the past?

Was there a terrorist attack recently in your country? How did you react?

What is your country's official policy/stance on guns?

How many of your citizens possess guns?

Will the ban have an affect on your country's economy?

Are there any external factors that may affect your country's position in the near future?

GOOD SITES TO HAVE A LOOK AT:

1. <https://www.un.org/disarmament/>
2. <http://www.gunpolicy.org/>
3. <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/A-Yearbook/2007/en/Small-Arms-Survey-2007-Chapter-02-annexe-4-EN.pdf>
4. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54218#.WDnPyvnhDIU>
5. <http://www.un.org/en/counterterrorism/>
6. <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>
7. <http://www.datagraver.com/case/worldwide-terrorism-1970-2015>

TOPIC #2: BORDER SECURITY IN REMOTE AND UNINHABITED REGIONS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Bearing in mind that securing state borders depends on their accessibility and military maintenance as well as their location. While our topic lets us include various types of endangered and often security-threatening borders, it is necessary to list at least a few examples of such situations.

Giving an example of the American Department of the Interior (DOI) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land which include more than 4 million acres of complete natural wilderness where the usage of motorised vehicles or the construction of roads is simply impossible or often prohibited; the Governmental power faces an enormous challenge in terms of protecting its state's borders in such inaccessible areas. From this summary, it shall be apparent that the problem in securing this border in particular comes from the lack of technical support or simply obstacles of natural origin.

On the other hand, there are many areas with unsecured borders due to military conflicts which lead to evasion of all local inhabitants from the territory and thereby lead to an even bigger security challenge for the state itself. Listing an example of borders between Afghanistan and Pakistan or USA and Mexico should be eloquent enough to explain the difference between borders abandoned due to war conflicts and the ones abandoned for reasons of natural obstacles etc. Also, do not forget to consider borders of maritime character too (such as the ones previously involved in major military conflicts).

UN INVOLVEMENT:

As we have already mentioned Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) which according to the Security Council itself represents one of the essential documents for fighting terrorism in the United States of America. The original synopsis of the resolution says that it is "It is the first line of defence against the movement of terrorists across borders and the illegal cross-border movement of goods and cargo." Including this quoted definition has an important purpose of showing how intertwined both of our topics are and how complex each of them obviously is.

Bear in mind, that the aforementioned resolutions is just one of the many examples of dealing with weak security measures in certain border areas.

BLOC POSITIONS:

Ensuring security and providing safety to a state's citizens obviously depends mainly on the financial sources of the country as well as on its political stance on the particular conflict concerning its borders (when talking military threats in particular). Therefore, it is very individual and depends solely on the situation in your country or its neighbour states and their mutual attitude or relations. For instance, the security of borders between Afghanistan and

Pakistan is hard to increase due to the crucial situation in both of the states as well as their political stance towards each other.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

Are there any areas concerning our topic in your country?

If so, which are they and why are they problematic?

How does your country protect its borders?

Is your country able/willing to provide financial support?

GOOD SITES TO HAVE A LOOK AT:

1. <https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/focus-areas/border-control/>
2. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/06/24/the-worlds-most-dangerous-borders/>
3. <https://www.thegctf.org/Cross-Cutting-Initiatives/Border-Security-Initiative>
4. <https://www.interpol.int/INTERPOL-expertise/Border-management>
5. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-30093261>