

Committee: Disarmament and International Security

Issue: Developing a multilateral agreement against the use of explosive weapons in populated areas

Student Officer: Alexandros Rizakis

Position: Deputy President

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

My name is Alexandros Rizakis I am a 17-year-old student and I will be attending the 12th grade in Leonteios School of Athens. My goal after I graduate from high school is to get into the psychology department of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

My passion for MUN started in the 10th grade when I first started attending conferences. Since then, I have attended 7 of them, though, this is the first time I am in the position of a student officer in an in-person conference and I am very excited about having the chance to experience a live MUN conference.

The following study guide will give you all the information you will need about the topic of “Developing a multilateral agreement against the use of explosive weapons in populated areas”. However, I also recommend doing your own research on the above matter so as to be able to accurately portray your specific country’s policy on the issue.

Should you have any questions on the topic or need any clarifications do not hesitate to contact me at mariosriizakis@gmail.com.

I look forward to seeing you all at the conference!

Best Regards,

Alexandros Rizakis

INTRODUCTION

In these times of challenges that confront our world, it becomes increasingly evident that we must address issues with a sense of urgency and unwavering commitment. The subject of "Developing an agreement, against the use of weapons" serves as a reminder of the necessity for nations to unite above interests and collaborate to combat the indiscriminate use of explosive weapons that pose a threat to the safety and well-being of populations across the globe. By placing an emphasis on cooperation, promoting measures and fostering resilience in times of adversity, we endeavor to navigate these turbulent times and carve a path towards a future that is both secure and sustainable. The challenges before us necessitate a response rooted in the principles epitomized by the conference theme. Together we strive to revive hope, empower communities and safeguard the foundations of peace, progress and human dignity. The truly devastating impact of these weapons on innocent civilians regardless of gender age or religion cannot be overstated. Lives are cut short, families are torn apart, and large communities are left devastated by the relentless violence unleashed upon them.

Additionally, this kind of acts cause tremendous damage to critical infrastructure, such as hospitals, schools and other vital services. This does not only cause damage to the people who are directly affected by the use of explosive weapons, but it also has post conflict consequences as the costs to repair all the damage previously done will be immense and will take a very long time. Furthermore, these incidents go unnoticed by the media and most people. They never get mainstream attention due to the frequency of such incidents, which is truly horrible, but, unfortunately, it is the reality we live in.

Having said that, it is high time a multilateral agreement was reached so that this important issue is resolved. This agreement will be overseen by the disarmament committee (GA1), the security council (SC), international organizations and humanitarian agencies. Its primary objective is to put an end and prevent the utilization of these weapons specifically focusing on safeguarding civilians and critical infrastructure during times of conflict. The agreement will encompass guidelines, data collection mechanisms and measures for holding those who violate it. Its aim is

to foster collaboration, advocacy and research in warfare methods, as a testament to our dedication towards humanity and a better future.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Explosive weapons

When a high explosive chemical is ignited and detonated to activate a conventional weapon, an explosion and fragmentation zone are created. These weapons are referred to as explosive weapons. Some good examples of such weapons are mortars, rocket and missile warheads, aircraft bombs, improvised explosive devices or IEDs among many others.¹

Populated area

A populated area is a region that is populated by a large number of people. It includes urban areas, towns, cities, villages and other densely populated areas where people live in. In such areas there is a ubiquitous presence of residential buildings, commercial businesses, critical public infrastructure and many other similar institutions. The size and density of a populated area can differ immensely depending on various factors, like the economic situation of the nation and many others, and they can vary from very small communities to large urban centers.²

Multilateral agreement

A multilateral treaty is a written agreement between three or more sovereign states establishing the rights and obligations between the parties. They often result in international conference or gathering of nations done under the auspices of international organizations. Bilateral treaties, by contrast, are negotiated between a limited number of states, most commonly two, establishing legal rights and

¹ "Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas." OCHA, 6 June 2023, www.unocha.org/es/themes/explosive-weapons-populated-areas.

² "Populated Area." *The Free Dictionary*, www.thefreedictionary.com/populated+area. Accessed 3 July 2023.

obligations between those two states only. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Geneva Conventions are examples of multilateral treaties.³

Strategic bombing

“Strategic bombing, approach to aerial bombardment designed to destroy a country’s ability to wage war by demoralizing civilians and targeting features of an enemy’s infrastructure such as factories, railways, and refineries that are essential for the production and supply of war materials. Some definitions of strategic bombing, however, also include roles for supporting ground troops in combat operations. Strategic bombing is a facet of total war, the enlistment of a society’s entire resources to aid in a conflict.”⁴

Collateral Damage

Collateral damage means incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians and damage to civilian objects or other protected objects or a combination thereof, caused by an attack on a lawful target.⁵

Barrel Bomb

“In common parlance the term refers to an improvised container (e.g. an oil drum or gas cylinder) dropped from an aircraft and filled with explosive, incendiary or other substances and often additional materials to increase fragment projection.”⁶

Sieges

“A situation in which soldiers or police officers surround a city, building, etc., in order to try to take control of it”⁷

³ US Legal, Inc. “Multilateral Treaty Law and Legal Definition.” *Multilateral Treaty Law and Legal Definition* | USLegal, Inc., definitions.uslegal.com/m/multilateral-treaty/. Accessed 3 July 2023.

⁴ “Strategic Bombing.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 18 May 2023, www.britannica.com/topic/strategic-bombing.

⁵ Collateral Damage Definition | Law Insider.” *Law Insider*, www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/collateral-damage.

⁶ *Barrel Bomb* | *Weapons Law Encyclopedia*. www.weaponslaw.org/glossary/barrel-bomb.

⁷ “Siege Definition & Meaning.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, www.britannica.com/dictionary/siege.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The dangers of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas

The use of explosive weapons in populated areas has severe and wide-ranging impacts on social, humanitarian, economic and security aspects. Socially, the indiscriminate use of such weapons leads to a high number of civilian casualties, causing immense physical and psychological harm to individuals and communities. Families are torn apart, children become orphans and survivors face long-term physical disabilities and trauma. The destruction of critical infrastructure, including schools, hospitals and residential areas, disrupts the social connection, displaces populations and hinders access to basic services, such as healthcare and education.

From a humanitarian perspective, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas exacerbates the already dire humanitarian crises in conflict-affected regions. Humanitarian aid delivery becomes challenging, as infrastructure and supply chains are destroyed or inaccessible. The displacement of people creates mass movements and strains existing resources, leading to overcrowded refugee camps and inadequate living conditions. Humanitarian organizations face significant obstacles in providing assistance, protection and essential services to affected populations, impeding efforts to address urgent needs and alleviate suffering.

The first uses of explosive weapons in populated areas

The use of explosive weapons in populated areas has been a phenomenon that has caused the loss of countless innocent lives and has caused tremendous damage to nations around the world throughout the past century and continues even in our day and age. Some of the first instances of using weapons in populated areas was the bombing of Liege in early 1914, where a German zeppelin flew over the Belgian city and released a large number of explosive ordinances upon the city, killing multiple civilians throughout the whole incident⁸. It is important to note that Germany faced no charges for that incident specifically, they faced repercussions for the events of World War 1 in general.

⁸ "Belgium Under the Bombs - Military Aspects - RTBF World War 1." *RTBF*, www.rtb.be/ww1/topics/detail_belgium-under-the-bombs?id=8358611.

Unfortunately, this would not be the end of such incidents as in the World War 2, the bombing of populated areas became much more frequent and on an even larger scale, for example the German bombings of both Guernica and Rotterdam. Although these events are separated by multiple years, they have one similarity that both resulted in many civilian deaths and in the levelling of both cities. Furthermore, the allied bombing of Dresden in 1945 near the end of the war saw the city being reduced to rubble by the 1296 allied strategic bombers leading to tens of thousands of civilian deaths.⁹



Figure 1: National World War 2 Museum. “Apocalypse in Dresden, February 1945”¹⁰

The use of explosive weapons in populated areas in the Middle East

The end of the 20th century and the start of the 21st also saw the start of many conflicts in the levant and middle east in general. One such conflict was the Iraq war of 2003 which marked the 2nd invasion of Iraq by the United States, the first one being the Gulf war in 1990-1991¹¹. Throughout both wars, there had been many

⁹ ---. “Bombing of Dresden | History, Deaths, and Facts.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 7 July 2023, www.britannica.com/event/bombing-of-Dresden.

¹¹ ---. “Persian Gulf War | Summary, Dates, Combatants, Casualties, Syndrome, Map, and Facts.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 4 July 2023, www.britannica.com/event/Persian-Gulf-War.

instances of collateral damage by aerial bombardment operations in populated areas, such as Baghdad and more specifically the Amiriyah shelter bombing that took the lives of hundreds of civilians¹². Furthermore, in the 2003 conflict there were even more recorded cases of noncombatants dying from bombings in major urban areas in the country and Baghdad was bombed for a second time leading to more noncombatants dying as a result of it.

The conflict in Syria, which began in 2011, has resulted in creating a prolonged crisis. The widespread use of weapons in populated areas has caused unimaginable suffering for civilians. Cities, such as Aleppo, Homs and Raqqa, serve as reminders of the devastation experiencing aerial bombardments, barrel bombings and sieges. Consequently, countless residential areas, hospitals, schools and cultural landmarks have been utterly destroyed. This destruction has led to the displacement of millions of Syrians. The prolonged bombing campaign and siege of Aleppo, between 2012 and 2016, caused suffering among the city's residents. Hospitals, schools and residential areas bore the brunt of the attacks leading to the loss of lives and leaving many injured. Similarly, the struggle for Raqqa in 2017 saw the Democratic Forces (SDF) and coalition forces battling to liberate the city from the grip of the Islamic State (ISIS). In Yemen, the conflict has seen the use of weapons, in populated areas causing a grave humanitarian crisis. The Saudi led coalition, which supports the government has carried out airstrikes and shelling resulting in significant civilian fatalities and infrastructure damage. There have been incidents during the civil war that underline the devastating impact on innocent civilians. One such incident occurred in 2016 when Sana'a was bombed, making it one of the worst attacks in the conflict. Over 140 people lost their lives¹³. Hundreds were injured as a result of this airstrike. The tragic targeting of mourners vividly illustrates the toll on civilians inadvertently entangled in the conflict. Another horrifying incident that garnered attention took place in 2018 when a school bus in Saada was bombed. This

¹² Barbarani, Sofia. "Amiriyah Bombing 30 Years on: 'No One Remembers' the Victims." *Conflict | Al Jazeera*, 17 Feb. 2021, www.aljazeera.com/features/2021/2/13/amiriyah-bombing-30-years-on-no-one-remembers-the-victims.

¹³ BBC News. "Yemen's Rebel Funeral Hall Attack 'kills Scores.'" *BBC News*, 9 Oct. 2016, www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37598413.

airstrike, attributed to the Saudi led coalition, caused the deaths of over 40 children and numerous injuries.¹⁴



Figure 2: Fires burn in and around Saddam Hussein's Council of Ministers in Baghdad, Iraq, during a wave of attacks in the "shock and awe" phase of "Operation Iraqi Freedom."¹⁵

The NATO Bombings of Yugoslavia

Throughout the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Bombings of Yugoslavia, which occurred between March and June 1999, a sequence of airstrikes was carried out targeting the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia encompassing Serbia and Montenegro. These actions were undertaken as a response to the conflict in Kosovo. Undoubtedly, these bombings stand as a chapter in history, capturing global focus and igniting discussions about military involvement and humanitarian aid and the implementation of force as methods of conflict resolution.

The unrest in Kosovo had been building up over a period due to the strained relations between the majority Albanian population and the Serbian government

¹⁴ "Schoolchildren Riding Bus Among Dozens Killed in Saudi Airstrike in Yemen." *CBC*, 9 Aug. 2018, www.cbc.ca/news/world/yemen-airstrike-saada-1.4778798.

¹⁵ "The Start of the Iraq War 20 Years Later in Photos." *WUNC*, 20 Mar. 2023, www.wunc.org/2023-03-20/the-start-of-the-iraq-war-20-years-later-in-photos.

under Slobodan Milosevic. Consequently, the situation grew increasingly volatile resulting in violence, human rights violations and a significant displacement of Kosovar Albanians fleeing their homes. In a bid to put an end to the cleansing and restore stability in Kosovo, NATO initiated an operation known as Operation Allied Force. The purpose of the airstrikes was to weaken the capabilities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and exert pressure on Milosevic to agree to a negotiated resolution. The campaign employed bombardment extensively utilizing cruise missiles and precision guided munitions.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Iraq

The connection between Iraq and the topic becomes apparent when exploring its recent history, the Gulf War and subsequent conflicts. These significant events have had an impact revealing the consequences of devastating weaponry on innocent civilians, a reality that cannot be emphasized enough. The toll of destruction has been immense resulting in the loss of innocent lives, the displacement of individuals from their homes and the widespread devastation of critical infrastructure necessary for the recovery of a struggling society. Baghdad, a capital with a rich historical background, experienced relentless attacks during the Gulf War leaving lasting scars on its urban landscape and communities. The ongoing conflict transformed cities, like Mosul and Fallujah, into battle zones, where explosive weapons were used without distinction, causing destruction to these urban centers and erasing centuries of history and cultural heritage.

Syria

Nestled amidst the beauty of the Middle East, Syria has captured attention due to its ongoing conflict. For a decade, Syria has experienced the realities of war revealing the impact of explosive weapons on its people. The utilization of armaments in populated areas has resulted in severe consequences that demand immediate international focus and action.

Throughout the duration of this conflict, cities and towns throughout Syria have witnessed firsthand the power of weaponry, even the ancient city of Palmyra recognized as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage site has suffered harm. Residential areas, hospitals, schools and vital infrastructure have all endured indiscriminate targeting, leaving behind a wake of destruction and immense human suffering. In addition to Aleppo and Palmyra, we must acknowledge that numerous other regions in Syria have also witnessed the consequences of weapons.

Ukraine

In the midst of the invasion of Ukraine, there have been violations of international law that amount to war crimes. The deliberate targeting of areas and the indiscriminate use of weapons in densely populated regions have resulted in unnecessary and disproportionate harm to innocent people. Russian forces have employed cluster munitions, bombs, missiles and artillery shells. Sadly, documented reports from the start of the war until 12th February 2023 indicate that 7,199 civilians have lost their lives due to these attacks and 11,756 were injured.¹⁶ Estimates suggest that 24,000 shells are fired every day by Russian troops.¹⁷ These actions urgently require attention from the community and a response to protect civilian lives while upholding humanitarian principles.

United States (US)

It is important to recognize the involvement of the United States in the Middle East, which encompasses notable instances of airstrikes and bombings that have had a profound impact on the region. Two noteworthy events that shaped the

¹⁶ OHCHR. "Ukraine: Civilian Casualty Update 13 February 2023." *OHCHR*, www.ohchr.org/en/news/2023/02/ukraine-civilian-casualty-update-13-february-2023.

¹⁷ "Ukrainian President Zelenskyy Says Donetsk Region Is 'Epicenter of Madness' in the Conflict." *NBC News*, 11 Nov. 2022, www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/russia-ukraine-war-ammo-rcna56210.

landscape were the Gulf War in 1990 1991 and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. These episodes raised questions about the utilization of weapons in populated areas.

The Gulf War emerged as a result of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. In response, an international coalition led by the United States intervened to liberate Kuwait and uphold United Nations resolutions. The conflict primarily unfolded through a series of bombardments, aimed at weakening the Iraqi military and infrastructure. While coalition forces made efforts to minimize casualties by precisely selecting their targets and utilizing advanced technology, the intensity of the conflict and the challenges posed by urban warfare inevitably led to unintended harm to civilian populations and essential infrastructure.

Yemen

The tragic and drawn-out civil war in Yemen serves as an example of how terrible the use of explosive weapons in populated areas are. Throughout the conflict, innocent Yemeni civilians have suffered greatly from attacks that show how these weapons do not discriminate. The ongoing siege of Hodeidah, a port city, further demonstrates the ranging consequences of explosive weapons on important infrastructure and civilian lives. Continuous bombings have made it difficult for aid and medical assistance to reach those who desperately need it, making a dire humanitarian crisis even worse. The destruction of services adds to the immense suffering of civilians leaving them vulnerable and facing incredibly tough challenges. The civil war in Yemen emphasizes how crucial it is to find solutions that address the use of weapons because it has caused enormous harm to both civilian lives and infrastructure. As the international community grapples with the complexities of conflicts, Yemen stands as a reminder that we urgently need a multilateral agreement that protects civilians in areas where they live and reduces the devastating impact of explosive weapons, on vulnerable communities.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

NATO's involvement in dealing with the problem of weapons in areas where people live is crucial for efforts to protect civilians during armed conflicts. As an alliance NATO has a duty to uphold the principles of humanitarian law and prioritize the safety and well-being of civilian populations. However, incidents like the bombings in Yugoslavia during the Kosovo conflict in 1999 serve as examples

highlighting the difficulties and consequences of using weapons in densely populated areas. The airstrikes carried out by NATO forces resulted in harm to civilians and widespread destruction of properties. By incorporating measures to protect civilians into their actions and fostering a culture of accountability, NATO can play a role in promoting responsible use of explosive weapons and reducing their impact on civilian populations. Working together with organizations and relevant stakeholders can further enhance NATO's efforts to address the devastating effects caused by explosive weapons in densely inhabited areas, ultimately working towards creating a safer world for everyone.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) holds a role in addressing the impact caused by weapons in areas where people live. Being an impartial organization, the ICRC is fully committed to safeguarding the lives and preserving the dignity of individuals affected by armed conflicts. Their actions encompass an array of endeavors, including delivering assistance like medical care, shelter and access to water and sanitation services to those impacted by conflicts. Moreover, the ICRC actively advocates for the protection of civilians, urging all parties involved in conflicts to adhere to their obligations under humanitarian law and reduce harm to innocent individuals. Concurrently, they extend support for the restoration and reconstruction of damaged healthcare facilities while advocating for compliance with law. Through their efforts in data gathering, research and advocacy, the ICRC contributes significantly towards shaping policies, influencing discussions and developing frameworks that more effectively protect civilians in situations involving explosive weapons in inhabited areas.

International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW)

The International Network on Explosive Weapons is an alliance of governmental organizations (NGOs) that actively strives to address the devastating impact caused by explosive weapons in areas densely populated by civilians. Composed of humanitarian, human rights and disarmament organizations, INEW dedicates itself to increasing awareness regarding the harm inflicted by explosive weapons. It fervently advocates for measures to safeguard civilians situated in

conflict affected regions. Through research data collection and insightful analysis, INEW provides evidence-based advocacy that informs policies and initiatives aimed at minimizing harm to noncombatants. Moreover, they engage in dialogues with governments, armed forces and other key stakeholders to encourage the integration of enhanced protection measures into policies and practices. The primary focus of INEWs endeavors revolves around fostering cooperation, facilitating the exchange of information and establishing norms and standards that effectively prevent harm to civilians amid armed conflicts. Ultimately, their ultimate aspiration is a world where the use of weapons in populated areas is minimized and the resulting humanitarian consequences are effectively mitigated. The International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW) actively participates in initiatives aimed at addressing the consequences of explosive weapons. They engage in advocacy and collaborative efforts to raise awareness and take action to safeguard civilians from the effects of these weapons.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
1899 and 1907	The Hague Conventions were adopted, which were the first multilateral treaties that addressed the conduct of warfare.
August 6 th 1914	The bombing of Liege by German Zeppelins took place.
April 27 th 1937	German Bombing of Guernica in The Spanish Civil war happened.
March 10 th 1940	German Bombing of Rotterdam during the blitzkrieg campaign on the Benelux and France happened.
July 1943	Operation Gomorrah which included the bombing of Hamburg took place.
February 13 th to 15 th 1945	Allied bombing of Dresden in an effort to bomb military targets happened/

August 2nd 1990 to January 17 th 1991	War of the Persian Gulf as a result of the Iraq invasion of Kuwait was during this time period.
24 th of March 1999 to 10 th June 1999	NATO bombings of Yugoslavia as a result of the Kosovo conflict took place.
October 7 th 2001 to August 15 th 2021	US troops were in Afghanistan, which meant the beginning of the war on terror.
March 19 th to May 1 st 2003	US invaded Iraq.
March 15 th 2011	Syrian Civil war started as a result of the Arab spring protests.
2014	Yemeni civil war started as a result of the tensions between Houthis and government forces.
February 24 th 2022	Russian invaded Ukraine.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

The Geneva Conventions¹⁸

The Geneva Conventions are a set of treaties that play a crucial role in tackling the problem of explosive weapons in populated areas. The Geneva Conventions of 1949 have a purpose: to safeguard civilians and noncombatants during times of armed conflicts. They lay down guidelines and standards for treating individuals with a strong emphasis on distinguishing between combatants and civilians. Moreover, they strictly prohibit attacks on civilians while requiring all parties involved to take precautions to minimize harm to the population. Ensuring adherence to the Geneva Conventions is of importance, as it helps prevent the use of explosive weapons and prioritizes the well-being and safety of civilians residing in populated areas. In brief, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 have had a beneficial

¹⁸ International Committee of the Red Cross. "The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Their Additional Protocols - ICRC." Icrc.org, 2010, www.icrc.org/en/doc/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law/geneva-conventions/overview-geneva-conventions.htm.

influence, on safeguarding both civilians and combatants during times of conflicts, by providing safeguards, preventive measures, accountability systems and promoting values. These conventions have played a vital role in reducing the catastrophic effects of war while upholding the dignity and rights of those impacted by such conflicts. However, enforcing these conventions and adapting them to warfare present challenges that require persistent efforts to ensure their practical implementation and universal adherence.

The Hague Conventions¹⁹

The Hague Conventions, which were established during the early 20th centuries, hold great importance in tackling the problem of explosive weapons in populated areas. These international agreements serve as the foundation for law with a primary focus on safeguarding civilians from armed conflicts. These conventions outline principles, including the differentiation between combatants and civilians, the prohibition of attacks and the obligation for parties involved to take necessary precautions to minimize harm to civilians. It is of significance to adhere to the guidelines set by the Hague Conventions in order to prevent the usage of explosive weapons and ensure the well-being of civilian populations residing in conflict affected regions. To sum up, the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 had an effect on shaping law concerning armed conflicts. These conventions introduced regulations to safeguard civilians, soldiers and cultural heritage. While their impact is still visible in the evolution of law, the challenges of enforcing these rules and adapting to modern warfare highlight the ongoing necessity for sustained endeavors to uphold principles of compassion and restraint during times of war.

UNSC resolution 2286 (2016)²⁰

UN Security Council Resolution 2286 (2016) holds significance as it strongly condemns the targeting of medical facilities and personnel in times of armed conflict, even when situated in densely populated regions. The resolution places emphasis on upholding humanitarian law and preserving medical neutrality. It acknowledges the

¹⁹ Hague Conventions | How Does Law Protect in War? - Online Casebook.
casebook.icrc.org/a_to_z/glossary/hague-conventions.

²⁰ Resolution 2286. unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2286.

consequences linked to such attacks and implores all parties involved to refrain from targeting medical facilities. Additionally, the resolution urges nations to initiate investigations into these assaults and take measures to hold the responsible individuals accountable, by placing a spotlight on safeguarding facilities and personnel in areas. Resolution 2286 underscores the vital role healthcare plays in conflict ridden regions while reinforcing the obligation to ensure the safety and security of medical services throughout armed conflicts. In summary, it is evident that UN Security Council Resolution 2286 plays a role in addressing the issue of protecting civilians during armed conflicts, especially when it comes to the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, by denouncing attacks on civilians, promoting adherence to law and emphasizing the importance of data collection and reporting. This resolution emphasizes the urgent necessity to safeguard civilian lives at times of war. However, it is imperative to be implemented. Ongoing commitment from the global community should ensure that the objectives outlined in the resolution are achieved and that civilians are shielded from the devastating consequences of armed conflicts are necessary.

The convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)²¹

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War play a role in tackling the issue of weapons and their lasting consequences. Protocol V specifically concentrates on conflict areas aiming to clear explosive remnants, provide assistance to victims and foster international cooperation. Although they may not directly address protection during conflicts, both the CCW and Protocol V acknowledge the dangers faced by civilians. They emphasize the importance of implementing measures to safeguard civilians and minimize the enduring impact of weapons. In summary, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons has played a role in regulating conventional weapons and safeguarding both civilians and combatants in times of armed conflicts. Through imposing limitations on weapon usage and fostering transparency and cooperation

²¹ The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons – UNODA. disarmament.unoda.org/the-convention-on-certain-conventional-weapons.

among nations, the CCW has significantly progressed law and reduced the detrimental effects of specific weapons.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Promoting Arms Control and Disarmament

The UN can play a vital role in urging states to pursue initiatives focused on arms control and disarmament with specific emphasis on explosive weapons. This includes fostering transparency, promoting measures that build confidence and encouraging cooperation aimed at curbing the proliferation and accessibility of these weapons. One way to accomplish this is by urging countries to be more transparent about their weapons stockpiles and military capabilities. By promoting the sharing of information on arsenals and military actions, the committee can encourage trust building measures and create an environment of openness. This will help alleviate suspicions and misunderstandings among nations. Transparent reporting can provide an understanding of the types and quantities of explosive weapons in circulation, which in turn can help identify areas that need immediate attention, fostering confidence in the disarmament process.

Destruction of stockpile

Promoting the destruction of stockpiles of weapons emerges as a step towards tackling their utilization in populated areas. It is of importance to advocate and provide support to initiatives that concentrate on the systematic elimination of surplus or outdated explosive weapons stockpiles. This endeavor necessitates collaboration, the establishment of programs and the cultivation of partnerships that facilitate the gathering, verification and disposal of these weapons. By endorsing the destruction of stockpiles, we can actively work towards preventing the spread of explosive weapons, mitigating the risk of unintended utilization or diversion to non-state actors and restricting their availability for deployment in populated areas during conflicts.

Strengthening of Global Cooperation

It is imperative for nations, international organizations and civil society to forge cooperation in order to tackle the pressing issues linked to the use of weapons in densely populated regions. This collaboration entails exchanging insights lessons learned and specialized knowledge to formulate strategies and methods aimed at preventing and minimizing civilian casualties. By allocating resources to conflict prevention initiatives, warning systems and peacebuilding efforts, we can effectively tackle the factors that give rise to conflicts. This proactive strategy reduces the necessity of resorting to weapons. Through addressing seated grievances, fostering dialogue and bolstering sustainable peace processes, we can minimize the risks and repercussions that explosive weapons pose on civilian populations.

Enhancing Data collection

Enhancing the collection of data regarding the use of weapons in areas holds significant importance for ensuring effective responses. To achieve this, it becomes essential to implement methodologies, reinforce reporting mechanisms, invest in capacity building efforts and actively involve communities. By adopting these measures, we can improve data collection practices enabling policymakers to gain an understanding of the impact caused by weapons. Consequently, they can devise strategies aimed at safeguarding civilians and ameliorating the repercussions that arise as a result.

Raising awareness

Raising awareness about the impact of explosive weapons in densely populated areas is a crucial step towards gaining global support in addressing this pressing matter. Public awareness campaigns play a role in mobilizing societies, rallying opinion and advocating for concrete actions aimed at safeguarding civilian lives during times of armed conflicts.

To ensure effectiveness these campaigns should focus on providing compelling information regarding the consequences stemming from the use of explosive weapons in areas densely inhabited by civilians. This can be achieved through the dissemination of data, statistics and real-life stories, illustrating the toll

these weapons take on populations, particularly vulnerable groups such, as children, women and older individuals.

FURTHER READING

- “Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas | Explainer.”
www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HGwWY5SixA.
- “Explosive weapons in populated areas”
www.icrc.org/en/explosive-weapons-populated-areas.
- “Explosive weapons in populated areas”
www.unocha.org/themes/explosive-weapons-populated-areas
- “Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas” - Key Questions and Answers
www.inew.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/INEW-QA-SEP-2019-REVJUL20.pdf.
- UN Secretary-General Issues Latest Protection of Civilians Report, Reiterates Concern Over Explosive Weapon Use in Populated Areas, Calls on States to Join the Political Declaration “Without Delay.” www.inew.org/un-secretary-general-issues-latest-protection-of-civilians-report-reiterates-concern-over-explosive-weapon-use-in-populated-areas-calls-on-states-to-join-the-political-declaration-without-d

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