

# DISEC Committee Guide

MUNOG 2023



**Topic: Disusing measures to prevent a nuclear war with special regard to the relationship between the United States and Russia**

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## I. Introduction of the Committee

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) was established in 1945 and comprises the main committees of the General Assembly. It deals with global challenges and threats to peace that affect the international community and seeks out solutions to the challenges in the international security regime. Furthermore, the role of DISEC is explained in Article 11, Chapter IV of the United Nations Charter: 'The General Assembly may consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments and may make recommendations with regard to such principle to the Members or to the Security Council or both'. Over the past years a lot of efforts have been made to deal with these problems which increased due to the discovery of Atomic Energy.



## II. Introduction to the Topic

1. What is a nuclear war?

A nuclear war is a war fought using nuclear (fission and/or fusion) weapons.

There are two different types of use of nuclear weapons.

Tactical nuclear warheads which are used against troops or infrastructure on the battlefield since they have a relatively short range.

Strategic nuclear weapons, on the other hand, are used for strategic targets, primarily in the enemy's rear, such as bunkers, missile emplacements, command centres, airfields, ports, industry, etc.

Commonly, their explosive power is several times greater than that of tactical nuclear weapons, and their delivery systems have a long to very long range.

## 2. Dangers



[https://www.icanw.org/catastrophic\\_harm](https://www.icanw.org/catastrophic_harm)

Nuclear weapons are the most destructive, inhumane and indiscriminate weapons ever created, not only in the scale of devastation they cause, but also regarding their damaging radioactive fallout. A war in which 1000 nuclear weapons would be used - about five percent of the global stockpile - would make the planet uninhabitable.

A fireball from a nuclear explosion takes about 10 seconds to reach its maximum size. It releases vast amounts of energy in the form of blast, heat and radiation.

The heart of the explosion would reach a temperature of several million degrees centigrade. The resulting heat flash would vaporise all human beings over a wide area. Furthermore, people sustain injuries from collapsing buildings, flying objects and the inflame of all combustible materials- or even die.

The blast also causes ear damage, fatal burns, blindness and internal bleeding.

Even People in underground shelters face likely death due to a lack of oxygen and carbon monoxide poisoning.

Survivors would be affected within a matter of days with radioactive fallout. The extent of the fall-out would vary according to whether the nuclear bomb detonates in the air or upon impact on the ground.

The effects of exposure to high levels of radioactive fall-out include hair loss, bleeding from the mouth and gums, internal bleeding and haemorrhagic diarrhoea, gangrenous ulcers, vomiting, fever, delirium and terminal coma. There is no effective treatment, and death follows in a matter of days.

At lower levels of exposure, there is an increased chance of short-term survival. Since those who survive would face many complications. For example, the healing from injuries would likely be slow, leaving distinctive scar tissue.

In the long-term, nuclear weapons produce ionizing radiation, which has long-term health consequences, including genetic damage and cancer and kills or sickens those exposed. Radiation-induced cancers affect many, often over twenty years later. The children of those exposed to radiation are statistically more likely to be born with abnormalities and to suffer from leukaemia.

Also, a nuclear war contaminates the environment.

Smoke and dust from a regionally limited nuclear war would result in a sudden drop in global temperatures and precipitation, as up to 10% less sunlight would penetrate to the Earth's surface. A nuclear winter would result.

The sudden cooling would shorten growing seasons and threaten agriculture around the world. Rising food prices would make food unaffordable for hundreds of millions of the poorest people. For those who are already chronically malnourished, a reduction in food intake of just 10% would lead to starvation.

Infectious diseases would spread epidemically and conflicts over scarce resources would become rampant.

If the entire global nuclear arsenal were deployed, 150 million tons of smoke would be emitted into the stratosphere, leading to a 45% decrease in rainfall. The earth's surface would become colder by an average of 7 to 8° C.

In addition, a nuclear war would lead to an enlargement of the hole in the ozone layer, which creates a substantial increase in ultraviolet radiation and cause a growth in skin cancer rates, damage vegetation and destroy marine life.

The overall consequences of a nuclear war would be even more horrific causing hundreds of millions-even billions-of people to starve to death.

The catastrophic environmental destruction and the potential extinction of cities and populations and the appalling deaths from radiation-poisoning should always be considered. Therefore, a nuclear war must be avoided at all costs.

### **3. Current situation**

Casualties from a major nuclear war between the US and Russia would reach hundreds of millions.

Since a global all-out nuclear war between the United States and Russia with over four thousand 100 kilotons nuclear warheads would lead, at minimum, to 360 million quick deaths. That is about 30 million people more than the entire US population.

This estimate is based on a scenario involving 4,400 100 kilotons of weapons under the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) limits, where each country can deploy up to 2,200 strategic warheads. The 2010 New START Treaty further limits the US- and Russian-deployed long-range nuclear forces down to 1,550 warheads. But as the average yield of today's strategic nuclear forces of Russia and the United States far exceeds 100 kilotons, a full nuclear exchange between the two countries involving around 3,000 weapons likely would result in similar direct casualties and soot emissions.

### III. Definition of terms

**Radioactive fall-out:** the radioactive particles that fall to earth as a result of a nuclear explosion. It consists of weapon debris, fission products, and, in the case of a ground burst, radiated soil

**Radiation:** Energy released in the form of particle or electromagnetic waves

**Arsenal:** is a large collection of weapons and military equipment held by a country, group, or person.

**To vaporize:** to turn something from a solid or liquid state into gas



### IV.

### Past actions to prevent a nuclear war

The **nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZs)** is an approach to strengthen global nuclear disarmament. It is defined as an agreement that a group of states has freely confirmed by treaty.

The establishment bans the development, manufacturing, possession, testing, stationing or transporting of nuclear weapons in those certain areas.

The term first appeared in the 1950s during the cold war due to a lack of international efforts towards peace and security.

Article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Weapons (NPT) states: „Nothing in this Treaty affects the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties in order to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories “.

The five areas that have confirmed to this treaty are Latin America and the Caribbean (1967), the countries along the South Pacific (1985), southeast Asia (1995), the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone treaty (1996) and in Central Asia (2006) (as also shown in the map above in orange).

Useful links for further information

<https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-russia-nuclear-arms-control>

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/01/03/p5-statement-on-preventing-nuclear-war-and-avoiding-arms-races/>

<https://www.un.org/nwzf/content/overview-nuclear-weapon-free-zones>

<https://www.un.org/nwzf/>