



GERMUN 2019

General Assembly Background Guide Update

I. The Role of Emerging Technologies in International Security and Disarmament

Recent developments

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research is an autonomous institute that generates ideas and promotes action on disarmament and security. This is a report of the UNIDIR Security Conference that took place May 2018. The conference examined the existing framework for space governance to see what aspects remain relevant to the emerging order in outer space, as well as what elements might be updated. Issues they name is the lack of space policies that ensure the sustainable and peaceful use of outer space, and further actions to strengthen international cooperation. This source is useful to analyze problems with existing frameworks.¹

The resolution A/RES/72/77 is the most recent resolution adopted by the General Assembly talking about prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Resolution mainly calls for the establishment of a legal framework to ensure peaceful exploitation and focuses on aspects of regional and interregional cooperation. This source is useful for delegates because it gives further information on the legal framework as well as what other measures are existing to ensure a peaceful use of outer space.²

The Nuclear Threat Initiative is a CSO founded in 2001 based in Washington D.C. NTI works on projects to reduce threat of mass destruction weapons and supports governments to raise awareness on disarmament. NTI's article about the proposed prevention of an arms race in space (PAROS) treaty provides the reader with an overview of the PAROS treaty beginning with background information how the treaty was negotiated. Further, the article explains the obligations and cooperativeness that comes with the Treaty. Especially useful for the delegates is the section explaining the developments of PAROS since PAROS is an important document in defining the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the treaty reaffirms the importance of the Outer Space Treaty. This source is useful to delegates because understanding the content of PAROS is crucial to find solutions on how to extend international cooperation in the peaceful uses of Outer Space.³

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¹ United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. (2018). UNIDIR Space Security Conference 2018, *Space Security: The Next Chapter, Conference Report* [Report]. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from:

<http://www.unidir.ch/files/publications/pdfs/space-security-conference-2018-space-security-the-next-chapter-en-714.pdf>

² United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-second session. (2017). *International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (A/RES/72/77)* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the Fourth Committee (A/72/446). Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <https://undocs.org/A/72/446>

³ Nuclear Threat Initiative. (n.d.). Proposed Prevention of an Arms Race in Space (PAROS) Treaty. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from: <http://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/proposed-prevention-arms-race-space-paros-treaty/>

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II. Improving Mechanisms for Accountability and Transparency within the UN System

Recent developments

Since her election in June 2018, the president of the General Assembly, Espinosa Garces has committed to the highest standards of transparency and accountability during her Presidency. Member States worked in close contact with the Presidency of the General Assembly in order to strengthen the accountability, transparency and institutional memory of the Office. On 17 September 2018, H.E. Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garces became the third President to take an oath of office in which she solemnly declared to truthfully perform the duties and exercise the functions entrusted to her as President of the General Assembly of the United Nations in all loyalty, discretion and conscience, and to discharge these functions and regulate her conduct with the interest of the United Nations only in view and in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the Code of Ethic for the Presidency of the General Assembly, without seeking or accepting any instruction in regard to the performance of her duties from any Government or other source external to the Organization. Furthermore, she is committed to openness and transparency with respect to the financing of her office. President Espinosa will finance her official activities and those of her Office solely through the United Nations regular budget and the Trust Fund of the Office of the President of the General Assembly (OPGA), thus increasing transparency. President Espinosa participates in the Financial Disclosure Programme, which helps to maintain and enhance public trust in the United Nations. She is the second President of the General Assembly to make her personal financial disclosure summary publicly available.⁴

On May 22nd. 2018, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and IOTA, a software company, signed a memorandum of understanding, which aims to explore how IOTA's innovative technology – which provides an open-source distributed ledger for data management – can increase the efficiency of UNOPS operations. IOTA's distributed ledger can provide a greater level of efficiency in the management and tracking of UN documents, supply chains and transactional payments in real-time, with access available to both UNOPS and its partners. The cooperation between both organizations will further extend the transparency and efficiency of the United Nation's work.⁵

The United Nations General Assembly approved a new reform strategy that offers the most ambitious and comprehensive transformation of the U.N. development system in decades, according to Secretary-General António Guterres. The plan for management reform will formally launch in January 2019, with the aim of simplifying policies and procedures, and synthesizing U.N. positions of authority. In practice, that will mean strengthening the roles of 129 resident coordinators, who are now covering 165 countries.

The resident coordinators are part of a new “dual reporting model” aimed at avoiding duplication of work among U.N. country team members tasked with reporting to both their own agencies and offices, while also reporting to resident coordinators. The reorganization plans will create a new department of management strategy, policy, and compliance, and a department of operational support to aid entities in weak environments. Funding for this plan will not come out of the U.N. core central budget, but rather will be supported by a new dedicated fund, backed by member states. The plan calls on member states to offer \$35 million to the resident coordinator system, and to also support the existing Joint Fund for the 2030 Agenda with \$290 million each year.⁶

⁴ United Nations, General Assembly of the United Nations, *Ethics and transparency*, (Website), retrieved 13 January 2019, <https://www.un.org/pga/73/about/ethics-and-transparency/>

⁵ United Nations Office for Project Services, *UNOPS and IOTA collaborate to bring transparency and efficiency to UN work*, (Website), retrieved 13 January 2019, <https://www.unops.org/news-and-stories/news/unops-and-iota-collaborate-to-bring-transparency-and-efficiency-to-un-work>

⁶ Lieberman, Amy: *“UN approves reforms for a more transparent, efficient system”*, retrieved 13 January 2019, <https://www.devex.com/news/un-approves-reforms-for-a-more-transparent-efficient-system-92867>

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III. Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence against Women

Recent developments

In recent years, progress has been made within the international community to address the ongoing issue of violence against women and girls.

In 2015 the 59th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) took place, where world leaders met at the United Nations.⁷ The year is remarkable, because of its 20-year anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPFA), which is considered as the most progressive guideline to gender equality.⁸ The CSW took stock on progress made 20 years after Beijing and highlighted remaining gaps which need to be addressed to achieve the 1995 BDPFA.⁹ In addition, the concurrence of the 70th General Assembly occurred, where the purpose was to commit to take action to close the gaps that are holding women and girls back.¹⁰ At this meeting, a new global development agenda was accepted by all countries and is still applicable to all.¹¹ Through its 17 goals, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (SDA), addresses the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental and signifies the foundation for global action for the next 15 years.¹² The SDA recognizes the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women as one of its key priorities and pledges that no person will be “left behind”.¹³ The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 of the agenda aims to “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” and includes specific objectives to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls.¹⁴ However, all SDGs are integrated and cannot be separated, therefore their achievement depends on ensuring analogue and interconnected implementation of the efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls.¹⁵

In 2016, the SDGs, began to guide global policy and action. These objectives include gender equality and women’s empowerment as a key priority and includes specific measures to end violence against women and girls.¹⁶ In 2016 the system-wide Secretary-Generals campaign UNiTE to end violence against women started to proclaim the 25th of every month as “Orange Day”.¹⁷ The color orange was chosen as a symbol of a brighter future, it calls upon activists, governments and UN partners to take action and highlight the importance of the issue.¹⁸ As the aim of the SDGs is that everyone should have these rights, but at the same time everyone needs to take action in ending gender inequality and violence, Orange Days highlighted specific SDGs as they relate to violence against women and girls.¹⁹

Underlining the purpose of one of the essential principals of the 2030 SDA, the UNiTE campaign celebrated 2017’s Orange Days, and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, under the overarching theme “Leave no one behind, Ending violence against women and girls”.²⁰ For this reason, throughout 2017, the UNiTE campaign highlighted specific SDGs through its Orange Days theme by signaling the implications and consequences of violence against women and girls within the most marginalized groups, including for example refugees and minorities and populations affected by conflict and natural disasters, amongst others. The aim was to reach global mobilization with these

⁷ World Health Organization, *59th Commission on the Status of Women takes place in New York*, (Website), 2019

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ United Nations, *About the General Assembly*, (Website), 2015

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, (Website), 2019

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ UN Women, *Ending Violence Against Women*, (Website), 2019

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ UN Women, *Ending Violence Against Women*, (Website), 2019

actions under the motto to “Leave no one behind” during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign.²¹

In recent years, the voices of survivors and activists, through campaigns such as #MeToo or #TimesUp and others, have reached the public, so that it cannot be silenced any more.²² Advocates know that while the names and contexts are geographically different, women and girls everywhere are in experience of badly abuses and their stories need to be heard.²³ In 2018 the global advocacy theme was under the motto Orange the World: #HearMeToo, where the UNiTE partners were encouraged to host events with regional and global women’s movements, survivor advocates and women human rights defenders and create opportunities for dialogue between involved people, e.g. activists and policy-makers.²⁴ All activities to prevent violence against women and girls are unified by the color orange. It is a key theme to bring global attention to the initiative.²⁵

Emphasizing the important role of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and identifying further progress, it needs to be recognized that not every country has fully reached an achievement of equality and empowerment for women and girls. Faster methods need to be addressed to stop this kind of violation of human rights.

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²¹ Ibid.

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²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.