

MUN Without Borders 2026 Chair Report

[Committee: Disarmament and International Security Committee]

Committee Overview

[AI Governance in Military Decision-Making]

[Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS)]

COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION:

This committee will follow THIMUN procedure, meaning that resolutions must be drafted prior to the start of the conference. Delegates are expected to come prepared with well-researched draft resolutions, working papers, and an understanding of relevant operative and preambulatory clauses. Submissions must follow THIMUN formatting standards (single-spaced, Times New Roman, etc). Additionally, it is highly suggested that every delegate conduct relevant research on the agenda, their country's stance, and past actions.

All delegates are expected to come to the first day of the conference with a working knowledge of all or most of the topics, as well as the policies of the countries that they represent. As the Disarmament and International Security Committee, it is imperative that delegates keep in mind that their purpose is to protect and promote universal human rights and fundamental freedoms without infringing upon national sovereignty. Above all, remember that Model UN is not a competition, so get to researching and try to have fun!

ABOUT US:

[Head Chair]

[Assistant Chair]

Lee-Ann Ha

[Chair Greetings]

Hi delegates! My name is Lee-Ann Ha, and I am a junior at Hankuk Academy of Foreign Languages High School (HAFS). This will be my sixth year participating in Model UN, and I could not be more excited to serve as your chair for DISEC. Outside of MUN, I enjoy watching movies and swimming. Whether this is your first conference or your tenth, I hope you come ready to think critically and have fun. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions before or during the conference!

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1. Introduction to DISEC

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) is the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. It addresses disarmament, global challenges, and threats to international peace and security, and works to identify cooperative solutions within the international security framework. DISEC works closely with — but is distinct from — the UN Disarmament Commission and the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament (CD), which are the bodies that actually negotiate binding arms control treaties.

As a General Assembly committee, DISEC's resolutions are recommendatory rather than legally binding. However, DISEC resolutions carry significant political weight: they establish international norms, build consensus among member states, mandate studies and expert groups, and frequently lay the diplomatic groundwork for treaties later negotiated in the CD or at dedicated treaty conferences. Delegates should remember that DISEC cannot authorize military action, impose binding sanctions, or compel any state to disarm. Its influence comes from shaping how the international community talks about, and eventually regulates, security threats — which makes the specific wording of clauses, and the breadth of consensus a resolution can command, especially important.

2. Agenda 1: Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space

2.1 Introduction to the topic

Outer space has become critical infrastructure for the modern world: satellites underpin global navigation, financial transactions, weather forecasting, telecommunications, and military reconnaissance. As more states and private companies gain access to space, it has also become an increasingly contested strategic domain. The prevention of an arms race in outer space, commonly abbreviated PAROS, refers to the decades-long international effort to keep outer space free of weapons and prevent a domain that today remains governed by only a thin legal framework from becoming the site of the next arms race.

The foundational legal instrument governing outer space is the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which establishes that space shall be used for peaceful purposes and prohibits placing weapons of mass destruction in orbit or on celestial bodies. However, the treaty does not ban conventional

weapons in space, nor does it clearly define what counts as a "space weapon." Anti-satellite (ASAT) missiles, co-orbital systems capable of approaching and disabling other satellites, ground-based jammers, directed-energy "dazzlers," and cyberattacks on satellite ground systems all fall into a legal gray zone. Because most space technology is inherently dual-use — a satellite built for civilian communications can often be repurposed, or is functionally near-identical to one used for military surveillance — states have found it very difficult to agree on where legitimate space activity ends and weaponization begins.

2.2 Definition of Key Terms

Outer Space Treaty (OST): The 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space. It bans placing nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction in orbit, restricts the Moon and other celestial bodies to peaceful purposes, and establishes that space exploration shall benefit all countries. It does not ban conventional weapons or define "space weapon."

PAROS: Shorthand for "Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space," the general diplomatic effort — and the title of the annual UN General Assembly resolution — aimed at keeping outer space free of weapons.

Anti-Satellite (ASAT) Weapon: Any system designed to disable or destroy a satellite. ASAT weapons can be kinetic (physically destroying a target, generating debris) or non-kinetic (jamming, dazzling, or cyberattacks that disable a satellite without destroying it).

Direct-Ascent ASAT (DA-ASAT): A ground-, air-, or sea-launched missile fired directly at a satellite to physically destroy it. Direct-ascent tests are the most debris-generating form of ASAT weapon and are the specific focus of the 2022 US-led testing moratorium.

Co-Orbital ASAT: A satellite placed into orbit that can maneuver close to another satellite to disable, capture, or destroy it. Harder to detect and attribute than a direct-ascent missile launch.

Space Debris: Defunct or fragmented human-made objects in orbit, including debris created by ASAT tests. High-velocity debris can destroy operational satellites and threaten crewed missions; it is a shared hazard for all spacefaring states, regardless of who caused it.

Dual-Use Technology: Technology that has both civilian and military applications — for example, a satellite that provides commercial GPS signals and also supports military navigation. Dual-use ambiguity is the central obstacle to defining a "space weapon" in international law.

Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs): Voluntary, non-binding steps states take to increase transparency and reduce the risk of miscalculation — for example, pre-launch notifications, debris-mitigation guidelines, or information-sharing on space activities.

PPWT: The draft "Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space," proposed by Russia and China (first in 2008, revised in 2014) at the Conference on Disarmament. It would legally bind states not to place weapons in orbit, but has not been adopted due to disagreement over verification and definitions.

Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG): A UN body open to participation by all member states, used to discuss and negotiate issues short of a full treaty conference. A dedicated OEWG on PAROS is currently meeting in Geneva through 2028.

2.3 Timeline of Key Events

1957 — The launch of Sputnik 1 marks the beginning of the space age and the start of great-power competition in orbit.

1967 — The Outer Space Treaty enters into force, banning weapons of mass destruction in orbit but leaving conventional space weapons unaddressed.

1978 — The UN General Assembly's first Special Session on Disarmament calls for negotiations to prevent an arms race in outer space, in the spirit of the Outer Space Treaty.

1981 — The General Assembly adopts the first resolutions that come to define the PAROS agenda item.

1985 — The Conference on Disarmament establishes an Ad Hoc Committee on PAROS to examine legal protections for satellites and confidence-building measures.

1994 — The Ad Hoc Committee's mandate lapses amid disagreement — chiefly between the United States and China/Russia — over whether it should be a negotiating body or a discussion forum; it has not been revived since.

2007 — China destroys one of its own defunct weather satellites (Fengyun-1C) with a direct-ascent missile, generating the largest single debris field in the history of spaceflight.

2008 — The United States destroys a malfunctioning US intelligence satellite with a modified missile-defense interceptor (Operation Burnt Frost).

2008 / 2014 — Russia and China submit, then revise, a draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space (PPWT) at the Conference on Disarmament.

2019 — India conducts "Mission Shakti," a direct-ascent ASAT test, becoming the fourth state with demonstrated kinetic ASAT capability.

2021 — Russia's Nudol system destroys the defunct satellite Cosmos 1408, generating over 1,800 tracked debris fragments and forcing the International Space Station crew to shelter in their return capsule.

2021 (Dec.) — The First Committee approves a new Open-Ended Working Group on reducing space threats through norms, rules, and principles of responsible behavior.

2022 (Apr.) — The United States unilaterally pledges not to conduct destructive direct-ascent ASAT missile tests, and invites other states to adopt the same norm; more than 35 states eventually join the pledge.

2022 (Dec.) — The General Assembly adopts resolution A/RES/77/41 endorsing the ASAT test moratorium by a vote of 155 in favour to 9 against, with 9 abstentions; Russia, China, and India do not support it.

2025–2028 — A new, dedicated Open-Ended Working Group on the "Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in All Its Aspects" holds substantive sessions in Geneva, the current live diplomatic process on this topic.

2.4 Past International Action

The 1967 Outer Space Treaty remains the cornerstone of space law but is widely acknowledged — including within the annual PAROS resolution itself — as insufficient on its own to prevent an arms race in outer space. The UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), established in 1959, addresses the civil and scientific uses of space and has produced additional instruments (the Rescue Agreement, the Liability Convention, and the Registration Convention), but does not deal with weaponization.

At the Conference on Disarmament, the PAROS Ad Hoc Committee (1985–1994) represents the only period in which states negotiated substantively on this issue; it has not been revived since, largely due to the CD's consensus-based rules and the broader gridlock affecting the CD's entire agenda. Russia and China's draft PPWT treaty remains on the table at the CD but has not advanced due to disagreements over verification and the treaty's definition of "space weapon." More recently, diplomatic energy has shifted toward the General Assembly and dedicated working groups: the 2021–2023 OEWG on reducing space threats through norms of responsible behavior, the 2022 US-led ASAT testing moratorium and its endorsement by the General Assembly, and the current 2025–2028 OEWG on PAROS in all its aspects, which is where most of today's live negotiation is taking place.

2.5 Positions of Key Member Nations and Bodies

Russia and China

Russia and China are the lead sponsors of the draft PPWT, and consistently argue that only a legally binding treaty — not voluntary norms — can genuinely prevent weaponization of space. Both states voted against the 2022 UNGA resolution endorsing the US-led ASAT testing moratorium, arguing that since the United States already possesses proven ASAT capability, a moratorium on further testing does not constitute real disarmament and mainly locks in the existing balance of power.

United States

The United States has generally opposed the annual PAROS resolution (it is typically the sole "no" vote), arguing that a new treaty is unnecessary because no weapons currently exist in outer space, and that verification of any binding ban is not practically achievable. It has instead led the

campaign for voluntary transparency and confidence-building measures, most notably its own 2022 moratorium on destructive ASAT testing.

European Union and Like-Minded States

Most EU member states and other close US allies (e.g., the UK, Japan, Canada, Australia) have joined the ASAT testing moratorium and generally favor incremental, verifiable transparency and confidence-building measures over an immediately binding treaty, citing the PPWT's unresolved verification problems.

India

India demonstrated its own ASAT capability with the 2019 Mission Shakti test and has so far abstained rather than joined the US-led moratorium, reflecting a position that balances continued capability development with general rhetorical support for restraint.

Global South / Non-Aligned Movement States

Many developing and non-aligned states support strong, binding restrictions on the weaponization of space, partly out of concern that an unregulated arms race in orbit would be dominated entirely by a handful of spacefaring powers, further marginalizing states without independent space access.

2.6 Possible Solutions / Questions a Resolution Must Answer

1. How should the international community define "weaponization" of outer space, given the dual-use nature of most space technology?
2. Should the committee pursue a legally binding PAROS treaty, or focus on achievable voluntary transparency and confidence-building measures in the near term?
3. How can the international community restrict or ban destructive ASAT weapons testing and the orbital debris it generates, in a way that all major spacefaring states might eventually accept?
4. What role should private commercial space actors — an increasingly significant share of objects in orbit — play in a future space security framework?

5. How can verification and compliance mechanisms be designed without requiring states to disclose sensitive national security information?
6. Should the committee build on the existing OEWG on PAROS, or propose a new negotiating mandate at the Conference on Disarmament?

3. Agenda 2: Governing Artificial Intelligence in Military Decision-Making

3.1 Introduction to the Topic

Artificial intelligence is increasingly integrated into military systems — not only in the form of lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS), which select and engage targets with limited or no direct human input, but more broadly in AI decision-support systems that recommend targets to human commanders, AI-assisted intelligence analysis, logistics planning, and even components of nuclear command-and-control. This topic asks delegates to look beyond the narrower and more familiar "killer robots" debate and consider the full range of ways AI is reshaping military decision-making — and how the international community can govern that shift before it outpaces existing law.

Discussions on autonomous weapons have taken place at the UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) since 2014, but progress has been slow: the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) tasked with the issue has yet to reach consensus even on a working definition of LAWS, let alone binding restrictions. Momentum has since shifted partly to the General Assembly, where states have adopted a series of resolutions since 2023 — both on LAWS specifically and on military AI more broadly — signaling that most member states now see this as an urgent governance gap, even though none of these resolutions are yet legally binding.

3.2 Definition of Key Terms

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Computer systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, including pattern recognition, prediction, and decision recommendation. In

the military domain, AI ranges from targeting algorithms to logistics-planning software to fully autonomous weapons.

Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS): Weapons systems that can select and engage targets without further human intervention once activated. States have not agreed on a single formal definition, which is itself one of the central obstacles to regulation.

AI Decision-Support System (AI DSS): A broader category than LAWS: AI tools that analyze data and generate recommendations — for example, a suggested list of targets — for a human operator to review and act on. AI DSS raises distinct concerns around automation bias, where human reviewers may over-trust an algorithm's recommendation.

Meaningful Human Control: A widely referenced but not precisely defined principle holding that a human being must retain sufficient understanding and authority over the use of force for moral and legal responsibility to remain meaningfully human, rather than delegated to a machine.

Human-in-the-Loop / On-the-Loop / Out-of-the-Loop: A common typology describing the degree of human involvement in an automated system's decision cycle: a human who must approve each action ("in the loop"), a human who monitors and can intervene ("on the loop"), or a system that acts without real-time human oversight ("out of the loop").

Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on LAWS: The main multilateral forum on autonomous weapons, operating under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) since 2014. It requires consensus among all participating states, which has significantly slowed its progress.

Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3): The systems and procedures through which a state authorizes and executes nuclear weapons use. Integrating AI into any part of NC3 raises distinct, higher-stakes escalation risks compared to conventional military AI applications.

3.3 Timeline of Key Events

2014 — States parties to the CCW begin informal discussions on lethal autonomous weapons systems.

2016 — The CCW formally establishes a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on LAWS.

2019 — The GGE adopts 11 non-binding Guiding Principles on LAWS, affirming that international humanitarian law applies to all weapons systems, without agreeing on binding restrictions.

2022 — 70 states deliver a joint statement on autonomous weapons at the First Committee, building momentum toward a General Assembly resolution.

2023 (Feb.) — The first Summit on Responsible AI in the Military Domain (REAIM) is held in The Hague, Netherlands.

2023 (Oct.) — The UN Secretary-General and the President of the ICRC jointly call for new international law on autonomous weapons, urging states to conclude a legally binding instrument by 2026.

2023 (Dec. 22) — The General Assembly adopts A/RES/78/241, the first-ever UN resolution on lethal autonomous weapons systems, by a vote of 164 in favour, 5 against, 8 abstentions.

2024 (Sept.) — The second REAIM Summit is held in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

2024 (Nov.–Dec.) — The First Committee adopts a second LAWS resolution (later A/RES/79/62) by a vote of 161 in favour, 3 against, 13 abstentions.

2024 (Dec. 24) — The General Assembly adopts A/RES/79/239, the first resolution specifically on "Artificial intelligence in the military domain," covering AI uses beyond LAWS; the First Committee vote was 165–2–6, with the resolution formally adopted 159–2–5 (Russia and the DPRK voting against).

2025 (Dec. 1) — The General Assembly adopts A/RES/80/57, a third LAWS resolution, welcoming continued progress in the CCW GGE.

2026 (Feb. 4–5) — The third REAIM Summit is held in A Coruña, Spain; its "Pathways to Action" outcome document is signed by roughly 40 states — notably fewer than the 58 and 63 states that endorsed the first two summits' outcome documents, reflecting reduced major-power engagement.

3.4 Past International Action

The CCW's Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS remains the principal dedicated multilateral forum on autonomous weapons, but its consensus-based procedure has limited it to non-binding guiding principles rather than treaty text, even after roughly a decade of talks. The UN Secretary-General's "New Agenda for Peace" (2023) called on states to conclude a legally binding instrument on LAWS by 2026, adding political urgency to the CCW process.

At the General Assembly, states have adopted three consecutive annual resolutions specifically on LAWS (2023, 2024, 2025) and, separately, a first resolution in December 2024 addressing the broader category of military AI applications beyond autonomous weapons — decision-support systems, logistics, and intelligence analysis. Outside the UN system, the REAIM summit series (The Hague 2023, Seoul 2024, A Coruña 2026), led by the Netherlands, South Korea, and most recently Spain, has become the leading multistakeholder forum, producing non-binding outcome documents built around principles like sustained human involvement in the use of force. However, REAIM's influence has been limited by uneven major-power participation — the United States played a reduced role and Russia was absent at the 2026 summit — illustrating how fragmented this governance space remains outside formal UN channels.

3.5 Positions of Key Member Nations and Bodies

United States

The United States has generally supported the General Assembly's LAWS study resolutions and played a founding role in REAIM, but has been cautious about any provision that could be read as constraining its own military AI development, and has favored voluntary, principles-based approaches over an immediately binding treaty.

Russia

Russia has consistently voted against or abstained on the General Assembly's AI and LAWS resolutions — it was one of only two states to vote against A/RES/79/239 — arguing that these General Assembly processes fragment and duplicate the CCW's GGE mandate, which it considers the only appropriate forum for this issue.

China

China has stated support for eventually negotiating a legally binding LAWS instrument in some CCW submissions, while simultaneously investing heavily in AI-enabled military systems domestically; delegates representing China should research its most recent CCW and First Committee statements closely, as its position has shifted over time and is often narrower in practice than its public statements suggest.

Netherlands and Republic of Korea

As co-authors of the 2024 "AI in the military domain" resolution and successive REAIM host states, the Netherlands and South Korea have positioned themselves as leading middle-power advocates for a practical, multistakeholder, principles-based governance approach that bridges the UN and non-UN tracks.

Global South / Non-Aligned States

Many developing states support faster movement toward binding restrictions, and have raised concerns in CCW and First Committee statements about the proliferation of military AI to non-state actors, and about unequal access to defensive AI capabilities widening the security gap between technologically advanced and developing states.

Civil Society and International Bodies

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has submitted detailed recommendations emphasizing that international humanitarian law applies throughout an AI system's life cycle, and the Stop Killer Robots coalition — over 270 NGOs across more than 70 countries — continues to campaign for a binding treaty ensuring meaningful human control over the use of force.

3.6 Possible Solutions / Questions a Resolution Must Answer

1. How should "meaningful human control" over AI-enabled weapons and decision-support systems be defined precisely enough to be verifiable?
2. Should lethal autonomous weapons systems be governed separately from broader military AI applications (logistics, intelligence, decision-support), or under a single unified framework?

3. What special safeguards, if any, should apply specifically to the use of AI in nuclear command-and-control systems, given the catastrophic stakes of nuclear escalation?
4. How can the international community balance the classified nature of military AI systems with the need for meaningful transparency and independent verification?
5. Should the committee pursue a single binding UN treaty, build on the CCW's GGE process, or formalize closer ties with the more flexible, multistakeholder REAIM track?
6. How should the committee address the risk of military AI proliferating to non-state actors, and the unequal access to defensive AI between developed and developing states?

4. Chair's Regards

Both agenda items this year ask delegates to confront the same underlying challenge: how to govern powerful new technologies before international law has caught up with them. Outer space and military artificial intelligence are, for now, largely unregulated domains — which means every resolution this committee drafts has the potential to shape norms that do not yet exist anywhere else. That is an unusual amount of freedom, and an unusual amount of responsibility. The Chair encourages delegates to read this report thoroughly, but not to stop there — both topics are actively developing at the United Nations right now, so delegates should follow current news and official UN documentation closely in the weeks before the conference. The Chair will look favorably upon delegates who focus on realistic, implementable policy mechanisms — reporting requirements, working groups, confidence-building measures, verification frameworks — rather than proposals that assume states will accept sweeping, binding restrictions on their own security capabilities overnight. Above all, remember that Model UN is not a competition: come curious, come prepared, and the Chair looks forward to seeing what this committee builds.

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