

# STUDY GUIDE

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## DISEC

### High School Committee

# ZuMUN 2024

April 12 - 14





## **DISARMAMENT & INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

Study Guide for Zurich Model United Nations 2024

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April 12 – 14, 2024

Zurich, Switzerland

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## Letter from the Chairs

Dear Delegates

Welcome to DISEC!

Ever since the United Nations (UN) was created in 1945, its main focus was to maintain world peace, global security, and serve as a center for harmonizing the actions of nations. As the main priority was creating and maintaining world peace, the Disarmament and International Security Committee, or DISEC, was established in the same year as the United Nations General Assembly (GA). As time moves on, new threats emerge. One such challenge is posed by the increasing destabilization of the world's democracies. Whether that is through corrupt governments endangering their people, or solitary agents seeking to disrupt the democratic process, it is now becoming more and more important for us to take care of our democratic institutions and not take their stability for granted.

It would be banal to say, "We live in unstable times", as this has always been the case. Even before the first nuclear bombing, the world had the capability of destroying itself. This threat has persisted throughout history, coming to its peak in 1962 with the Cuban Missile Crisis. Since its creation in 1945, DISEC has consistently been attempting to reduce global armament and to safeguard the citizens of the world from the violence perpetrated by singular leaders or regimes.

Our first topic, **State Sponsored Violence**, is rooted in one of the primary reasons behind the creation of DISEC, International Security. Whilst the UN has often restated the importance of Human Rights and the governments' role in protecting its people, there are still few concrete measures in place for what to do when the situation of State Sponsored Violence arises. This debate aims to deliberate on how, and if, the UN and the international community can better intervene and aid in such situations.

Nowadays the world faces a new threat, coming not from physical weapons, as we are used to, but from a new, invisible source – AI. Some of us might be familiar with AI as assistance for internet research or tools for generating art, but not many are actually aware of the threat Artificial Intelligence brings to democracy and peace in the modern world. The current situation makes our second topic, **AI and its Dangers to Democracy**, as timely, as it is important. Perhaps each of us carries a potential weapon of global totalitarianism around in our pockets?

We hope that this study guide will be a good introduction to our two topics and will give you a better understanding of what we consider to be relevant for the upcoming debate. In case you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to any of us and we will do our very best to help you. We are so excited for ZuMUN 2024 and can't wait to see what ideas you come up with!

Your chairs, Anna, Ansu, and Ivan

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## Your Chairs



**Anna.** Hi everyone! I'm Anna, a third year Political Science student at the University of Zurich. When I'm not busy reading up on current political issues I love to run, bake, dance, and rewatch Gilmore Girls (I think I'm watching it for the fifth time now...). ZuMUN will be my first-time chairing at an MUN conference and I'm very excited to get to know all of you, on- as well as off-session. See you soon!



**Ansu.** Hi guys, I'm Ansu :) I'm a third-year medical student at UZH. In my admittedly limited spare time, I love reading, cycling, and crocheting (I always have 3-4 projects going at the same time). The last two years I was a USG for ZuMUN and this year I'm excited to be more involved in debate and less behind the scenes. Looking forward to meeting you all and hearing all your ideas!



**Ivan.** Welcome to DISEC delegates! I'm Ivan, Civil Engineering student at ETH Zurich. I just started with my studies last Autumn and so far, have been doing mostly mathematics. Other than that, I'm a Plane Spotter and ETHMUN content director. I have had experience chairing in the past during weekly sessions in my school MUN (UNF) and in ETHMUN. Further, I have chaired at one conference before. I'm looking forward to hearing you debating and see you working on resolutions!

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## DISEC

The First Committee considers disarmament and international security matters. It is one element of the wider “UN disarmament machinery” that was created in 1978 by a Special Session of the GA. This First Committee works in close cooperation with the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament (a permanent multilateral negotiating forum) and the UN Disarmament Commission (a subsidiary body of the GA). Usually, meetings are held at the end of September and finish at the end of October.

### About DISEC (C1)

#### First Committee

According to the UN Charter, the purpose of DISEC in the General Assembly is to establish ‘general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments and to give “recommendations with regard to such principles to the Members or to the Security Council.” Although DISEC cannot directly advise the Security Council’s decision-making process, the UN Charter explains that DISEC can suggest specific topics for Security Council consideration. Aside from its role in the General Assembly, DISEC is also an institution of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA). The UNODA is concerned with disarmament on all level’s nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction, and conventional weapons. Further, they assist DISEC through their work conducted in the General Assembly to further its disarmament initiatives.

#### Scope and organization of work

The agenda items assigned to C1 are categorized into seven thematic clusters:

- encompassing nuclear weapons
- other weapons of mass destruction
- outer space (with a focus on disarmament aspects),
- conventional weapons
- regional disarmament and security
- other disarmament measures and international security
- the disarmament machinery.

Additionally, a joint panel discussion involving C1 and C4 is slated for the 72nd session to address security challenges in outer space.

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## **Bodies reporting to C1**

- Conference on Disarmament (CD)
- Disarmament Commission (DC)
- Expert groups established based on a recommendation of C1

## **Debates and discussions**

A general debate, typically spanning eight days, inaugurates the Committee's proceedings. This is succeeded by two weeks allocated for thematic discussions on each of the seven clusters. These sessions involve exchanges with high-level officials in arms control and disarmament, including the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBT-O) and the Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Certain discussions are formatted as panel discussions. Additionally, the Committee engages in interactive dialogues with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, as well as representatives from both formal and informal disarmament entities.

## **Resolutions and decisions**

C1 adopts 50–70 resolutions and a few decisions annually. About half the resolutions are adopted by consensus. Usually, draft resolutions are first negotiated parallel to the general debate in informal meetings under the facilitation of the sponsor and tabled when the texts are ready for adoption.

## **Civil Society Participation**

On the last day of the General Debate there can be informal interactions with civil society organizations.

## **Support and Delegates**

The Office for Disarmament Affairs provides substantive support to the Committee, and the Disarmament and Peace Affairs Branch (DPAB) in DGACM provides secretariat support. The Head delegates to DISEC are, in many cases, representatives to the Conference of Disarmament in Geneva.

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## Topic A: State Sponsored Violence

### What is State Sponsored Violence?

State-sponsored violence refers to acts of aggression or coercion carried out by a government or its agents against individuals or groups within its jurisdiction, often with the aim of maintaining control, suppressing dissent, or enforcing policies. This form of violence can manifest in various ways, including but not limited to:

1. **Excessive Use of Force:** This involves the use of disproportionate or unnecessary force by state authorities, such as police or military, against civilians. This can include violent dispersal of protests, harsh crackdowns on dissent, or brutal suppression of opposition movements.
2. **Political Repression:** Governments may engage in tactics such as arbitrary arrests, detention without trial, torture, or extrajudicial killings to suppress political opposition or dissenting voices.
3. **State Terrorism:** Some governments resort to acts of terrorism or state-sponsored terrorism to achieve political objectives. This may involve targeting civilians, either domestically or internationally, to instill fear or achieve specific goals.
4. **Ethnic cleansing and Genocide:** In extreme cases, governments may engage in systematic violence against specific ethnic, religious, or social groups with the intention of eliminating or forcibly removing them from a particular territory. This can escalate to the level of genocide, where mass killings, forced displacement, and other atrocities are committed with the intent to destroy the targeted group.
5. **War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity:** During armed conflicts, state actors may commit various atrocities that violate international humanitarian law, including targeting civilians, using indiscriminate weapons, conducting mass executions, or engaging in sexual violence.

State-sponsored violence is typically used in instances where governments seek to consolidate power, silence opposition, or enforce policies through fear and intimidation. These actions violate fundamental human rights and often result in widespread suffering and destabilization of societies.





## Historical and Modern Examples of State Sponsored Violence

1. **The Holocaust (1930s-1940s):** Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler orchestrated the systematic genocide of six million Jews, along with millions of others including Romani people, Poles, disabled individuals, and others deemed undesirable by the regime. This state-sponsored genocide, known as the Holocaust, stands as one of the most horrific examples of state violence in modern history.
2. **Stalinist Repression (1930s- 1950s):** Joseph Stalin's regime in the Soviet Union carried out widespread purges, forced relocations, and mass executions to eliminate perceived enemies of the state. The Great Purge in the 1930s resulted in millions of deaths, while forced collectivization and famines caused additional millions to perish.
3. **Khmer Rouge Regime (1975- 1979):** The Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, orchestrated a brutal regime in Cambodia that resulted in the deaths of an estimated 1.7 to 2.2 million people through execution, forced labor, starvation, and disease. The regime aimed to create an agrarian socialist society and targeted perceived enemies, intellectuals, ethnic minorities, and those associated with the previous government.
4. **Rwandan Genocide (1994):** The Rwandan Genocide saw the systematic killing of approximately 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus by extremist Hutu militias, with the support and encouragement of the government at the time. Radio broadcasts and state propaganda played a significant role in inciting violence, leading to one of the fastest genocides in history.
5. **Myanmar/ Burma Rohingya Crisis (2010s-present):** The Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar has faced severe state-sponsored violence, including massacres, rape, and mass displacement, largely perpetrated by the military and security forces. The government's policies and actions have been widely condemned as ethnic cleansing and genocide by the international community.
6. **Syrian Civil War (2011-present):** The Syrian government under Bashar al-Assad has been accused of widespread atrocities, including the use of chemical weapons, barrel bombs, torture, and indiscriminate attacks on civilians. State-sponsored violence, alongside actions by various other factions in the conflict, has led to hundreds of thousands of deaths and millions of refugees.
7. **Bosnian War - Srebrenica Massacre (1992-1995):** During the Bosnian War, the government of Serbia, under the leadership of President Slobodan Milošević, provided support to Bosnian Serb forces led by General Ratko Mladić. In July 1995,



Bosnian Serb forces launched an offensive against the UN-declared safe area of Srebrenica, which was under the protection of Dutch peacekeepers. Despite assurances of safety, Bosnian Serb forces, under the command of General Mladić, committed genocide by systematically killing over 8,000 Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) men and boys in and around Srebrenica. The massacre was characterized by mass executions, sexual violence, and forced displacement. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and later the International Court of Justice (ICJ) classified the Srebrenica massacre as genocide and held several individuals, including Ratko Mladić, accountable for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

## Previous Measures and Framework

The United Nations has played a pivotal role in creating numerous essential documents that set forth the standards governments should uphold to protect the human rights of their people. These documents, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, declarations, guidelines, and frameworks, serve as the cornerstone of international human rights law. They articulate the fundamental rights and freedoms that every individual is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, nationality, or any other status. By establishing these standards, the UN provides a comprehensive framework for governments to ensure the protection, promotion, and fulfillment of human rights within their jurisdictions. These documents not only outline the rights that individuals possess but also specify the corresponding obligations of governments to respect, protect, and fulfill these rights. Through these standards, the UN strives to create a world where the inherent dignity and worth of every person are recognized and upheld, fostering peace, justice, and equality for all.

These include, but are not limited to:

**Responsibility to Protect (R2P):** The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is a principle endorsed by the United Nations, which outlines the responsibilities of states and the international community in preventing and responding to mass atrocities. R2P consists of three pillars. The third pillar, "Timely and Decisive Response," focuses on the circumstances under which the international community may consider collective action to prevent or halt mass atrocities. This pillar emphasizes the importance of diplomatic, humanitarian, and, in extreme cases, military intervention authorized by the UN Security Council. Such intervention aims to protect populations at risk when a state manifestly fails

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to do so, either through incapacity or unwillingness. While the principle recognizes the sovereign rights of states, it also underscores the collective responsibility of the international community to uphold human rights and prevent egregious violations, such as genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. Ultimately, decisions regarding intervention are made on a case-by-case basis by the Security Council.

**UN Guidelines for Human Rights Defenders:** The UN Guidelines for Human Rights Defenders provide essential guidance for the protection of individuals and groups who work to promote and protect human rights, including those who advocate against state-sponsored violence. These guidelines emphasize the rights and freedoms of human rights defenders, including the rights to freedom of expression, association, and assembly. They also highlight the responsibilities of states to ensure the safety and security of human rights defenders, including by investigating and prosecuting threats and attacks against them. By safeguarding the rights and safety of human rights defenders, these guidelines contribute to the prevention of state-sponsored violence and the promotion of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

**UN Frameworks for Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention:** The UN has developed various frameworks for peacebuilding and conflict prevention, that aim to address the root causes of violence and promote sustainable peace and development. These frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UN's Agenda for Peace, and the UN's Sustaining Peace Agenda, emphasize the importance of inclusive governance, institutional reform, and economic and social development in preventing conflicts and addressing the drivers of state-sponsored violence. By addressing underlying grievances and promoting reconciliation and dialogue, these frameworks contribute to the prevention of state-sponsored violence and the promotion of peace and stability.

**UN Human Rights Treaties and Declarations:** The UN has adopted several human rights treaties and declarations, that establish international norms and standards for the protection of human rights. These instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, amongst others, articulate the rights and freedoms that states are obligated to respect, protect, and fulfill. By promoting adherence to these treaties and declarations, the UN contributes to the prevention of state-sponsored violence and the promotion of human rights and dignity for all individuals.

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As illustrated through these Treaties, the UN has achieved much with regards to promoting the Values of Human Rights and the Security of the Populous. However, there are little to no concrete mechanisms in place that enforce these rights.

### Guiding Questions

1. Should there be concrete framework for the UN and international community to follow in cases of state sponsored violence? If yes, what should that look like?
2. What does restoration after state sponsored violence look like and how should it be implemented?
3. How can the UN and the international community prevent state sponsored violence without impacting a nations sovereignty?
4. How can restoration work when the perpetrators of state sponsored violence are still in power, or the conflict is still ongoing?



## Topic B: AI and its Dangers to Democracy

### A brief history of AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) traces its origins to the mid-20th century, when early pioneers like Alan Turing laid the groundwork for computational models of intelligence. However, the most significant advancements have occurred in the past two decades, driven by the convergence of several key factors. One of the most transformative developments has been the explosion of big data. The proliferation of digital information has provided AI systems with unprecedented amounts of data to learn from, enabling them to extract patterns, make predictions, and derive insights at scales previously unimaginable.

Deep learning, a subset of machine learning inspired by the structure of the human brain, has emerged as a dominant paradigm in AI research. By leveraging neural networks with multiple layers of abstraction, deep learning algorithms have revolutionized fields such as image recognition, natural language processing, and speech recognition. These advances have enabled AI systems to achieve human-level performance in tasks ranging from object recognition to language translation. Today, AI is ubiquitous in our daily lives, powering virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa, personalized recommendations on streaming platforms, and autonomous vehicles. AI-driven algorithms optimize supply chains, detect fraud, diagnose diseases, and even compose music and generate art. However, along with its remarkable capabilities, AI also raises profound ethical, social, and economic questions. Concerns about privacy, bias, job displacement, and the concentration of power in the hands of tech giants have sparked debates about the responsible use and regulation of AI technologies. One particularly concerning aspect of AI is the rise of deepfakes, which are manipulated images or videos created using AI algorithms. These deepfakes can be used to convincingly alter faces, voices, and even entire scenes, raising concerns about the potential for misinformation, identity theft, and manipulation. As deepfake technology becomes increasingly sophisticated, it poses significant challenges for media literacy, cybersecurity, and trust in digital content.

### Opportunities and Threats

AI also has the potential to affect the way we live in democratic states today in positive as well as negative ways. On the one hand, AI has the potential to improve civic engagement by providing citizens with easier access to information about government services and policies. This fosters transparency and can increase participation in democratic processes. AI can

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also improve decision-making within government institutions. By analyzing large volumes of data, AI algorithms can identify trends and patterns that might be missed by human analysts, thus allowing policymakers to make more informed decisions. Furthermore, AI can contribute to promoting inclusive governance by helping governments understand and address the needs of diverse communities. By analyzing demographic data, AI can identify areas of inequality or marginalization, leading to more inclusive policies and programs that promote social cohesion and reduce disparities. Furthermore, AI's predictive capabilities enable governments to anticipate and mitigate potential challenges before they arise, leading to more responsive and adaptive policymaking.

On the other hand, AI also has the potential to pose serious threats to democracy. Firstly, AI-powered algorithms can be used to manipulate public opinion and sway political outcomes through targeted disinformation campaigns, fake news, and social media manipulation. This can undermine the integrity of democratic processes by distorting public discourse and eroding trust in institutions. The capability of AI systems to collect, analyze and process vast amounts of personal data also raises concerns about privacy infringement and surveillance. Mass surveillance programs powered by AI technologies can enable governments and other actors to monitor citizens' activities, suppress dissent, and violate individuals' rights to privacy and freedom of expression. Furthermore, the automation of jobs and tasks through AI technologies can lead to widespread job displacement and economic disruption, particularly in industries reliant on manual labor. This can exacerbate existing inequalities by widening the gap between skilled and unskilled workers, contributing to social unrest and economic instability. While AI can help enhance transparency, it can also produce the opposite effect. AI algorithms are often opaque and difficult to interpret, making it challenging to hold individuals and organizations accountable for their actions. Biased or discriminatory algorithms can perpetuate systemic inequalities and undermine the fairness and transparency of decision-making processes, particularly in areas such as law enforcement, hiring practices, and access to public services. Lastly, AI-driven personalized content recommendations and social media algorithms can create filter bubbles and echo chambers, reinforcing individuals' pre-existing beliefs and preferences while limiting exposure to diverse viewpoints. This can contribute to social polarization, tribalism, and the erosion of shared democratic values, making it increasingly difficult to engage in constructive dialogue and compromise.

## Previous measures and framework

### **UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence**

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These recommendations address ethical issues related to AI within UNESCO's mandate. They provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating AI's impact on human society, empathizing human dignity and well-being, and calls for AI prevention of harm.

Not only do they offer a single definition of AI, but they also emphasize key ethical aspects. According to their definition, AI systems are viewed as technologies capable of processing data and information while exhibiting intelligent behavior such as learning, reasoning, and decision-making. Their recommendation addresses ethical concerns spanning from research and development to deployment and usage, particularly focusing on decision-making in various fields like employment, education, healthcare, media, and social interaction. UNESCO gives particular emphasis to the integration of AI in core areas such as education, culture, science, communication, and information.

Understanding the intricacies of AI is crucial. It is imperative that AI algorithm operate with transparency and accountability, enabling users to comprehend how decisions are made. AI initiatives must uphold ethical principles, including respect for human dignity, promotion of racial and gender equality, preservation of freedom of speech and privacy, and a commitment to environmental conservation. Additionally, AI should consider its impact on realms like art, culture, literature, and media, while ensuring the protection of human rights.

The integration of AI technologies is highly valued, and the deployment of AI should serve to benefit people across all social strata. Particularly, efforts should be made to ensure that AI advancements extend these benefits to individuals in low- and middle-income nations. A crucial aspect of the deployment strategy of AI is educating and raising public awareness.

### **European Data Protection Supervisor**

*“As stated by the European Data Protection Authorities in the EDPS-EDPB Joint Opinion on the AI Act, it is paramount that the use of AI systems that pose unacceptable risks to individuals and their fundamental rights are prohibited. This includes the prohibition to use AI systems.”*

### **European Commission AI act**

The European Commission AI act aims at addressing risks created through the application of AI. It determines which spheres of AI application are high risk, and defines four levels of risk for AI systems:

1. Unacceptable Risk: AI use is impossible (those of high risk which do not meet their specific obligations);



2. High Risk
  - a) Critical infrastructures which can put citizens life and health at risk)
  - b) Safety components of products (robot assisted surgeries)
  - c) Law enforcement
  - d) Essential private and public services (e.g. Credit or insurance scores)
  - e) Migration (e.g. visa issue based on automated AI examination).
  - f) Administration of justice and democratic processes (e.g. AI solutions to court rulings);
3. Limited risk: AI systems with a specific transparency obligation, per example, ChatGPT;
4. Minimal Risk: AI systems do not pose a significant risk.

## Guiding Questions

1. How can we ensure that AI systems uphold democratic values such as fairness, accountability, and transparency?
2. How can we combat the spread of disinformation and fake news facilitated by AI-powered algorithms?
3. Should there be international treaties or agreements to govern the use of AI in certain areas?
4. What mechanisms are needed to address biases and discrimination in AI systems?
5. Should there be independent oversight bodies to monitor and evaluate the ethical implications of AI applications?

## Further reading and useful sources

UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381137>

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European Commission (2023) AI Act <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/regulatory-framework-ai#:~:text=The%20AI%20Act%20introduces%20specific,to%20continue%20or%20step%20back.>

## Other

Note: APA citation style is preferred, but if you are consistent throughout your text with your citations and references, other citation styles are also permitted. Also note that, though you may do so, you do not need to provide any in-text references, be that through parentheses, footnotes or otherwise, except if you are directly citing a source. What is important though, is that you provide the references to all your sources in this section at the end of your study guide. Alphabetical order of references is preferred.