



DIYAFAH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL L.L.C

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NURSERY حضانة



DISMUN 2026-2027 | UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

STUDY GUIDE 2026-2027





United Nations

Security Council

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL BACKGROUND GUIDE 2026-2027

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2026-27 Diyafah International Model United Nations Conference (DISMUN-Abu Dhabi)! We are pleased to welcome you to the Security Council. This year's Chair is Joanne Catherine Manimala, who is currently in Year 13. This year's Deputy-Chair is Evangelia Christou, who is currently in Year 13.

The topic under discussion for the Security Council is:

- Preventing Nuclear Escalation in an Era of Strategic Competition

The Security Council is comprised of five permanent members and ten non-permanent members. The five permanent members of the Security Council are China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

We hope our delegates can utilise this background guide, as it introduces the topics for this committee. We urge you all to recognise that this guide is not meant to replace further research. We highly encourage in-depth research into your member state's policies and the use of the annotations to further your knowledge on these topics.

As geopolitical rivalries intensify and nuclear-armed states modernize their arsenals, the risk of miscalculation, accidental launch, or deliberate escalation has grown significantly. Your responsibility as delegates is to understand the evolving nuclear landscape, evaluate the effectiveness of existing arms-control mechanisms, and propose innovative, realistic solutions to reduce nuclear risks.

This guide provides a foundation for your research, but we strongly encourage you to explore your assigned country's policies, alliances, and strategic interests in depth.

On the [DISMUN](#) webpage, you will find resources that are essential to your preparation for the conference and as a reference during committee sessions. The [DISMUN Handbook](#) explains each step in the delegation process from preconference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Delegates should not discuss the topics or agenda with other members of their committee until the first committee session. We urge our delegates to be respectful of this request.

In addition, please review the mandatory [DISMUN Conduct Expectations](#) and the [DISMUN Procedure](#) on the DISMUN website. DIS wants to emphasise that any instances of discrimination based on race, gender, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact Communications.DISMUN@diyafahinternationalschool.com

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Chair Joanne Catherine Manimala

Deputy Chair Evangelia Christou

Committee History

“One place where the world's nations can gather together, discuss common problems and find shared solutions.”

Introduction

The United Nations Security Council is one of the six primary organs of the United Nations, mandated by the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security. The Council submits an annual report to the General Assembly. After the devastating effects of two world wars, the international community decided to establish the United Nations (UN) (as an intergovernmental organisation) with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, creating the conditions conducive to economic and social development, while advancing universal respect for human rights. The Security Council was established as one of its six principal organs and has been given the primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

The Security Council held its first session on 17 January 1946, at Church House in London. After its first meeting, the Council relocated to its permanent residence at the UN Headquarters in New York City. At that time, five permanent members and six non-permanent members comprised the membership of the Council. However, over subsequent years, discussions regarding the structure of the Council began to take place. In 1965, the number of non-permanent members increased to ten, and although membership has not changed since, discussions regarding a configuration change take place frequently.

The UNSC's role in nuclear security has been central since the dawn of the atomic age. From Resolution 1540 on preventing nuclear terrorism to sanctions regimes addressing nuclear proliferation in Iran and North Korea, the Council remains the world's foremost authority on nuclear governance.

Governance and Structure

The Security Council is the only UN entity that has the power to adopt resolutions that are binding on Member States. In accordance with Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations (1945), Member States are obliged to accept and carry out the Council's recommendations and decisions. The Security Council also has a variety of tools to address issues on its agenda. For example, the President of the Security Council may issue press statements or presidential statements to communicate the position of the Council. Although these other tools are not legally binding, they nonetheless bring attention to important issues and compel the members of the Security Council to make recommendations and resolve conflicts.

Membership

The Security Council is comprised of five permanent members and ten non-permanent members. The five permanent members of the Security Council are China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America. Every year, the General Assembly elects five of the 10 non-permanent members for a two-year term. Elections for non-permanent seats on the Council can be competitive, with countries expressing interest years in advance. Countries elected to serve on the Security Council are expected to represent the interests of their region; they usually have an influence at the international level and demonstrate leadership in specific areas of interest (in their foreign policy). Security Council elections for non-permanent members are held in June, six months before the term starts. This change allows Member States ample time to prepare for their new role.

Presidency

Each member of the Security Council holds the presidency of the Council for one month, rotating according to alphabetical order. Security Council meetings can be convened by the President upon the request of any Member State. Under Article 35 of the Charter, the President shall call a meeting if a dispute or situation requires the Council's attention. According to Rule 6 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure, all concerns that are brought to the attention of the Secretary-General are drafted in an agenda that is approved by the President of the Security Council.

Participation

Any Member State of the UN may attend the Council's meetings upon the invitation of the Council. Member States are invited if the Security Council is discussing an issue that directly concerns the interests of the Member State. Invited Member States do not have the right to vote but are allowed to submit proposals and draft resolutions. Furthermore, those Member States can inform the Council about a current crisis in their region. However, such proposals may be put to a vote only at the request of a member of the Council.

Voting

Every Member State of the Security Council has one vote. Votes on all matters require a majority of nine Member States. However, if one of the five permanent members of the Security Council votes "no" on a matter of substance, such as a draft resolution, the draft resolution does not pass. Despite the existence of this veto power, the Council has adopted many resolutions by consensus since the end of the Cold War and has been divided only on a very limited number of issues.

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The mandate of the Security Council is to maintain international peace and security, as specified in the Charter of the United Nations. Chapters VI and VII of the Charter specifically concern the Security Council and the range of actions that can be taken when settling disputes. Chapter VI aims to achieve resolution of disputes by peaceful means, whereas Chapter VII explores further actions that can be taken. Any Member State can report a dispute to the Security Council; the role of the Council is to determine the severity of the dispute brought before the body and the impact of the dispute internationally. The Security Council is

responsible for making recommendations to broker peace that take into consideration the previously attempted measures by the parties involved. Non-military actions that can be implemented include blockades or economic interruptions. In aggregate, the Charter provides the Security Council with the following set of powers to fulfil its mandate.

- **Sanctions:** Under Article 41 of the Charter, the Council can call its members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or end violence. These include economic sanctions, financial penalties and restrictions, travel bans, severance of diplomatic relations, and blockades, among others. It may further mandate arms embargos, enforce disarmament, or initiate proceedings in the international justice system.
- **Diplomatic Tools:** The Council has a mandate to investigate any dispute or situation that might lead to aggression between states or other non-state groups or within states' national territories. To do so, it may "recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement; formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments; determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and recommend what action should be taken."
- **Military Action:** The Council may take military action against a state or other entity threatening international peace and security and may further decide on the deployment of troops or observers. The Security Council may also decide to initiate peacekeeping operations, as well as the extensions of their mandates and subsequent modification or withdrawal of any troops.
- **Partnerships:** The Council also cooperates with several international and regional organisations as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to implement its decisions. Cooperation between the Security Council and UN-related organisations, such as the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the International Atomic Energy Agency, is significant, but partnerships with independent intergovernmental organisations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the African Union are also of paramount importance for addressing a broad range of issues such as terrorism, disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation, and extreme violence from non-state actors, among others.

Conclusion

As the international community faces increasing asymmetrical threats from non-state actors and transnational organised crime, the Security Council has adapted to new working methods and broader and more open discussions. But these situations also represent the systemic divides among Council members. This lack of capacity can be partially explained by the Council's controversial decision-making process, specifically the veto power of the five permanent members. However, as the Security Council represents the only body within the UN that has the power to adopt binding resolutions, it is still the entity of utmost importance for the maintenance of international peace and security.

SECURITY COUNCIL

“Preventing Nuclear Escalation in an Era of Strategic Competition”

Introduction

Nuclear weapons remain the most destructive tools ever created. While the Cold War ended decades ago, nuclear risks have re-emerged due to:

- rising geopolitical tensions,
- modernization of nuclear arsenals,
- erosion of arms-control treaties,
- emerging technologies (AI, cyber warfare, hypersonic missiles),
- and the increasing involvement of non-state actors.

Today’s nuclear landscape is shaped by strategic competition among major powers—particularly the United States, Russia, and China—alongside regional nuclear tensions in South Asia and the Korean Peninsula. Preventing nuclear escalation requires diplomacy, transparency, crisis-management mechanisms, and renewed commitment to arms control.

1. What Is Nuclear Escalation?

Nuclear escalation refers to the process by which a conflict involving nuclear-armed states increases in intensity, potentially leading to the use of nuclear weapons.

Escalation can be:

- Deliberate — intentional use of nuclear weapons for strategic advantage
- Accidental — due to technical malfunction or misinterpretation
- Inadvertent — arising from miscalculation or miscommunication

In an era of rapid technological change, the risk of inadvertent escalation is higher than ever.

Drivers of Nuclear Tension in the Modern Era

1. Strategic Competition Among Major Powers

- United States vs. China: Indo-Pacific tensions, Taiwan, military modernization
- United States vs. Russia: breakdown of arms-control treaties, Ukraine conflict
- China vs. India: border disputes and nuclear modernization

2. Collapse of Arms-Control Architecture

Key treaties have weakened or expired:

- INF Treaty (ended 2019)
- JCPOA (uncertain status)
- ABM Treaty (withdrawn 2002)
- New START (expires 2026)

Without these frameworks, transparency and predictability decline.

3. Emerging Technologies

- AI-enabled early-warning systems
- Hypersonic missiles
- Cyberattacks on nuclear command-and-control

These technologies shorten decision-making time and increase uncertainty.

4. Regional Nuclear Flashpoints

- Korean Peninsula
- India–Pakistan

Existing International Frameworks

1. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

The cornerstone of global nuclear governance, but increasingly strained.

2. Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

Not yet in force; major states have not ratified.

3. IAEA Safeguards

Critical for monitoring nuclear programs but limited by state cooperation.

4. UNSC Resolutions

- 1540 (non-state actors)
- 1718 (North Korea)
- 2231 (Iran)

5. Bilateral Treaties

- New START (US–Russia)
- Confidence-building measures (India–Pakistan hotlines)

Despite these mechanisms, enforcement and compliance remain inconsistent.

Case Studies:

Case Study 1: The United States and China — Nuclear Risks in the Indo-Pacific

Assessing Nuclear Escalation Risks in the U.S.–China Strategic Rivalry

The strategic rivalry between the United States and China has become one of the most consequential drivers of nuclear risk in the 21st century. As tensions intensify over Taiwan, the South China Sea, and broader Indo-Pacific influence, both states have accelerated military modernization and expanded their nuclear capabilities. China is rapidly increasing the size and sophistication of its nuclear arsenal, aiming to achieve what analysts describe as “nuclear parity” with the United States. This shift challenges long-standing assumptions about deterrence stability in the region.

A major concern is the lack of robust communication channels between Washington and Beijing. Unlike the Cold War–era mechanisms established between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the U.S.–China relationship lacks reliable crisis hotlines and formal arms-control agreements. This absence increases the risk of miscalculation, particularly during military exercises or close encounters near Taiwan. Furthermore, both

states are integrating AI-enabled early-warning systems, which, while intended to improve detection, may also generate false alarms or accelerate decision-making timelines in ways that heighten escalation risks. Military activities around Taiwan—including naval patrols, air incursions, and large-scale exercises—further raise the potential for unintended confrontation. Without crisis-management mechanisms, even a conventional clash could spiral into a nuclear standoff. The Indo-Pacific thus represents a region where strategic competition, technological uncertainty, and political mistrust converge, creating a fragile environment in which escalation could occur rapidly and unpredictably.

Case Study 2: India and Pakistan — Nuclear Brinkmanship in South Asia **Evaluating Nuclear Stability in the India–Pakistan Rivalry**

South Asia remains one of the world's most volatile nuclear flashpoints, shaped by decades of conflict, territorial disputes, and deep political mistrust. India and Pakistan have fought multiple wars since independence, and tensions over Kashmir continue to fuel periodic crises. Both states possess nuclear weapons and maintain ambiguous nuclear doctrines, which complicate deterrence and increase the risk of miscalculation.

Pakistan's development of tactical nuclear weapons—designed for battlefield use—has significantly raised escalation risks. These weapons lower the threshold for nuclear use and create uncertainty about command-and-control during fast-moving conflicts. India's "Cold Start" doctrine, which envisions rapid conventional strikes in response to terrorist attacks, further heightens concerns that a limited conflict could escalate quickly. Although communication hotlines exist between the two states, they are often underutilized during crises, reducing opportunities for de-escalation.

The presence of non-state actors adds an additional layer of unpredictability. Militant groups operating in the region have previously triggered crises that brought India and Pakistan to the brink of conflict. Any future attack attributed to such groups could provoke rapid military responses, increasing the likelihood of escalation before diplomatic channels can be activated.

Given these dynamics, South Asia represents a region where nuclear brinkmanship, political volatility, and the involvement of non-state actors combine to create a uniquely dangerous environment. A single miscalculation—whether intentional or accidental—could lead to catastrophic consequences for the region and the world.

Challenges to Preventing Nuclear Escalation

Preventing nuclear escalation in the current geopolitical environment is increasingly complex due to a combination of strategic mistrust, rapid technological change, and shifting global power dynamics. One of the most significant challenges is the erosion of trust among major nuclear-armed states. Accusations of treaty violations, destabilizing military activities, and covert modernization programs have weakened confidence in long-standing arms-control frameworks. This distrust reduces transparency, increases misinterpretation during crises, and makes states less willing to engage in cooperative security measures. A second challenge arises from technological uncertainty. Emerging technologies—such as artificial intelligence, cyber warfare capabilities, and hypersonic delivery systems—have dramatically shortened decision-making timelines and increased the risk of miscalculation. AI-enabled early-warning systems may misinterpret data, cyberattacks could compromise nuclear command-and-control networks, and hypersonic missiles reduce the time available for verification or diplomatic intervention. These technologies introduce new escalation pathways that existing treaties were never designed to address.

The global nuclear landscape has also shifted toward a multipolar nuclear order, where a growing number of states possess nuclear weapons or advanced delivery systems. Unlike the bipolar Cold War structure, today's

environment involves multiple nuclear dyads with distinct doctrines, threat perceptions, and regional disputes. This complexity makes deterrence less predictable and increases the likelihood that a regional conflict—such as in South Asia or the Korean Peninsula—could escalate into a broader nuclear crisis. Finally, domestic politics play a critical role in shaping nuclear policy. Nationalism, political polarization, and leadership changes often hinder diplomatic compromise. Governments may adopt hardline positions to satisfy domestic audiences, resist arms-control agreements perceived as limiting national sovereignty, or prioritize short-term political gains over long-term global stability. These internal pressures make sustained cooperation difficult, even when mutual security interests are clear.

Policy Recommendations

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive, multi-layered approach that strengthens global governance, enhances transparency, and reduces the risk of miscalculation. A key priority is to rebuild the arms-control architecture that has eroded in recent years. Extending and expanding the New START Treaty would preserve the last remaining strategic arms-control framework between the United States and Russia. Initiating formal U.S.–China strategic stability talks is essential to prevent misinterpretation in the Indo-Pacific, while reviving JCPOA-style agreements can restore transparency in regions vulnerable to proliferation.

Equally important is the establishment of crisis-communication mechanisms that reduce the risk of accidental escalation. Nuclear hotlines between major powers, joint military incident-prevention centers, and confidence-building transparency measures can help prevent misunderstandings during periods of heightened tension. These mechanisms have historically played a crucial role in de-escalating crises and remain vital in an era of rapid technological change.

Given the destabilizing potential of new technologies, states must also regulate emerging military capabilities. Banning AI-controlled nuclear launch systems ensures that life-and-death decisions remain under meaningful human control. Developing international norms for hypersonic missile deployment can prevent destabilizing arms races, while strengthening cyber protections for nuclear command-and-control systems reduces the risk of unauthorized access or false alarms. Finally, the international community must strengthen non-proliferation efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Supporting robust IAEA inspections, enhancing the enforcement mechanisms of the UN Security Council, and promoting regional nuclear-weapon-free zones can help limit proliferation and reinforce global norms against nuclear use. These measures, taken together, form a comprehensive strategy to reduce nuclear risks and maintain international peace and security in an era of strategic competition.

Conclusion

Preventing nuclear escalation in today's era of strategic competition is one of the greatest challenges facing the international community. As nuclear risks rise and arms-control frameworks weaken, the Security Council must take decisive action to promote transparency, rebuild trust, and strengthen global governance. Artificial intelligence, cyber capabilities, and hypersonic weapons have transformed the nuclear landscape, making miscalculation more likely than ever. Yet with diplomacy, cooperation, and innovative policy solutions, nuclear catastrophe is not inevitable.

As delegates, you have the responsibility to craft realistic, forward-thinking strategies that reflect your country's interests while prioritizing global security.

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