

## Security Council | Issue 2

# Military Overreach

**Author:** Ian VanSteenbergh, President of the Security Council | HS KUNA 2

### **BACKGROUND ON ISSUE:**

The premise of the UN Security Council is peace and security, and with that, the prevention of war. The Security Council is guided by those principles to facilitate diplomacy between nations and in turn prevent another large-scale, international war from beginning. While each nation has the right to develop, train, and operate its militaries, the egos of each respective country often interfere in international diplomacy. Yet, most nations fail to remember the atrocities and those egos that led to the biggest and deadliest war in history, World War II. Preventative mediation and diplomacy is a complex issue; but despite differing opinions from all nations, all countries can agree peace and diplomacy is necessary, especially with the complex weaponry and equipment now involved.

The problem with sustaining peace and security, other than the egos and yearning for power of the leaders of Member States, falls within military aggression, and in turn, military overreach. This is arguably seen when the majority of larger, wealthier countries use their power and militaries to be "world police". These larger countries are using their militaries in other portions of the world to enforce their own beliefs. Often, this is during times where a country is in its own internal civil war and outside countries will come in and support either the government or rebels. This could also be when Human Rights are being violated or disputed, and rivaling countries come into the country to enforce their own opinions. The peace and security of the world as a whole is being violated by the over-militarization.

The gross development of militaries in the world has been hurting the average person. The world spent almost \$2 trillion on military spending last year alone. This vastly surpasses the global spending on combating hunger, ending climate change, and most other issues. The United States of America spends \$778 billion a year on its military, The People's Republic of China spends \$252 billion a year, and India spends \$72.9 billion a year on their military. Most of this money is spent training soldiers, investing in wars outside of their borders, and putting on a military display of might.

The overall issue of over-militarization and military overreach covers and affects other issues within the nations. Often times soldiers in the military are prone to sexual violence with little to no punishment occurring, and the overall presence of deadly weapons increases the chances of civilian harm in some form or fashion. Not only that, but the outright dangerous "show of force" only increases tensions between feuding nations. It is also outside involvement that can cause a civil war within a country, such as the American-led intervention in Syria, causing the Syrian Civil War. Furthermore, there are ghastly negative environmental effects and oftentimes, human rights violations. Military overreach stems into more harm done than good.

### **CONFLICT ONE: The South China Sea**

The People's Republic of China has been constructing artificial islands in the South China Sea, primarily as military bases, in order to establish its presence further in the region and to extend their boundaries. The almost 3,200 acres of island they have constructed has inflamed tensions in the region. Many of the around nine countries in the region have contested China's claim of land: Brunei,

Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam, specifically. This has also spilled over with the allies of these nations sending military services to these nations to protect themselves and show military force.

In fact, the United Nations International Court of Justice (ICJ) sided with the nations contesting China's right to the South China Sea. The ICJ ruled in favor of the Philippines and other neighboring countries, expanding their territory to the South China Sea. However, China has not followed the orders by the Court to cease their aggressive operations and artificial island-building. China profits not only off the military bases, but the \$3.7 billion that passes through and about 40 percent of liquified natural gas trade transits through the region of waters, which China wishes to oversee. The blatant disregard of the ICJ decision has inflamed tensions within the region, causing military overreach not only with China, but the other nations laying claims to the South China Sea and their allies.

### **CONFLICT TWO: Conflict in Ukraine**

After the Ukrainian President failed to accept a deal between the European Union and Ukraine, intense protests broke out in the capital city of Kiev. After the internal political crisis, and the President of Ukraine fleeing the country, the Russian Federation had the opportunity they needed to invade Ukraine's Crimea Region. Russia armed their military and forcefully invaded the Crimea region, allowing little to no defense against the soldiers, tanks, and military might of Russia. Now, Russia claims the invasion was necessary to "protect the rights of Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Crimea and southeast Ukraine." If that was not enough, Russian-built missile systems shot down a Malaysian Airlines flight in Ukraine, killing all on board.

The entire conflict between Russia and Ukraine has caused more than 10,000 civilian deaths and has caused an estimated 1.5 million internally displaced people. The entire conflict has pulled in allies of Ukraine; the allied nations providing defense monetary aid and NATO deploying multiple battalions across Eastern Europe to prevent further Russian aggression. While it seems that the conflict's tensions have lowered, the further military operations against Ukraine by Russia, would provoke NATO's member countries to defend Ukraine, potentially sparking a worse conflict.

### **CONFLICT THREE: Conflicts in the Middle East**

The Middle East has erupted into multiple conflicts and crises due to over-militarization. Syria, Israel and Palestine, Yemen, and Afghanistan are a few of the many countries where these conflicts are occurring. In Syria, an ongoing civil war is fueled by the Syrian government- backed by Russia and Iran- and anti-government groups- backed by the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. In Israel, a civil war of sorts between the Israeli and Palestinian governments has been heavily aided by countries such as Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. In Yemen, a Saudi Arabian-backed coalition and Iranian-backed rebels continue to fight for control of the government. And in Afghanistan, the conflict between the United States and rebel groups has subsided for the most part.

While all of the conflicts above have much more to them than what is presented in the paragraph above, all of them happen to have outside support, both militarily and monetarily. While most of the conflicts deal with governmental instability, terrorism, or human rights violations, the majority of the conflicts are still not over and have caused millions of people to be killed, displaced, or in need of assistance.

### **QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN POSITION PAPERS (5)**

- 1) What other issues affecting your country could be tied back to the military? (i.e. Environmental effects, sexual violence, and civilian harm)

- 2) How has the military budget of your country affected its global influence and how it addresses global conflicts?
- 3) What are your country's rival nations and how does your country interact with them in terms of militarization?
- 4) What, if any, conflicts outside of your own country is your nation involved in? What is its role? Why are they involved?
- 5) Overall, how would your country respond to a resolution limiting military overreach? How would you work with countries with a differing view?

### **SOURCES FOR RESEARCH (7)**

1. <https://www.un.org/en/our-work/maintain-international-peace-and-security>
2. <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2021/world-military-spending-rises-almost-2-trillion-2020>
3. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/262742/countries-with-the-highest-military-spending/>
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-53397673>
5. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/territorial-disputes-south-china-sea>
6. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-ukraine>
7. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/war-yemen>