

# E.A.MUNC 2023



## Disarmament & International Security Committee (DISEC) Background Guide

### **AGENDA**

*Ethics Of Surveillance Technology*

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## HISTORY OF DISEC:

The United Nations Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) was created as the first of the Main Committees in the General Assembly, when the charter of the United Nations was signed in 1945, and so, it is also referred to as the First Committee. This committee addresses issues that are related to disarmament challenges to global security as well as threats to international peace.

Disarmament is the act of reducing, limiting, or abolishing weapons. DISEC mainly deals with the broad issues of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, regional disarmament and security, other disarmament measures and international security. It serves as a platform for discussion, negotiation, and advocacy, with the intent to establish principles for international peace. In 1952, the General Assembly, by its resolution 502 (VI) of January 1952, created the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) under the Security Council with a mandate to prepare proposals for a treaty for the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments. This can help countries to focus more on socioeconomic development, human well-being and prosperity.



# Introduction:

Surveillance is the monitoring of human activities and behaviour in order to collect, influence, manage or direct information. Surveillance service involves the deployment of CCTV cameras, censors, digital videos, honeypots, drones, audio devices and so on. The most widely used among the above, is the CCTV as it captures and stores videos in real time. As of 2021, it has been recorded that over 1 billion CCTV cameras have been installed worldwide, of which, over 540 million cameras are located in China. Besides that, places in India, Russia and the UK make it to the top 10 most surveilled locations in the world. Due to this roaring amount of surveillance, the questions of its ethics are bound to rise. Though surveillance is generally used as a safety measure in households, countries from all over the globe fear the use of such technology from foreign nations as it could be used wrongfully to extract sensitive and confidential information.

People all around the world are being introduced to impressive technological developments that improves their lives and also their nation's economies. Nonetheless, they are also shedding light on how digital tools can be turned against them, exposing them to new forms of monitoring, profiling and control.

Governments have often tried to justify their excessive use of surveillance by saying "if you have done nothing wrong, you have nothing to fear". However, every citizen deserves a right to privacy and transparency. Governments often "forget" to inform their citizens about their surveillance activities, and even when they do the needful, surveillance devices are not too difficult to be repurposed and used for acts which they were not originally purposed for.

The General Assembly, In its resolution 68/167, requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit a report on the protection and promotion of the right to privacy in the context of domestic and extraterritorial surveillance and/or the interception of digital communications and the collection of personal data, including on a mass scale, to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-seventh session and to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, with views and recommendations, to be considered by Member States.

Ensuring respect for and protection of the right to privacy, has been recognized in article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which states that "*No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks*" and similar such internationally accepted laws.

As part of DISEC, it is our duty to discuss the ethics of surveillance, and form a resolution which favors the best of interests of all nations, and its citizens.

# Challenges:

## **1. Lack of transparency from the governing bodies controlling nationwide surveillance.**

One of the biggest concerns of the citizens of every nation is the lack of transparency and knowledge about the surveillance that they are put under. Information about private individuals may be shared, or hacked, through the numerous CCTV cameras in the country. In 2013, light was shed on the fact that The National Security Agency, an intelligence agency of the United States Department of Defense was working with companies such as Google, Facebook and Verizon in order to collect surveillance data without a warrant. This raises the question of whether or not, the government can collect data of individuals without proper proof or consent, or even without their knowledge of the same being done.



## 2. Misuse of sensitive information.

Every citizen of a country has a right to know where their data goes, and whether its being used for the right reasons for which it was collected, or otherwise.

Misuse of information is a common malpractice followed in many countries of the world for the purpose of spying, or to get the wind of criminal activity that persists in such places. It is referred to as the wrongful use of information, or disclosure of the same, with the intent to exploit an individual's privacy.

surveillance provides governments with immense power of their citizens; basically negates the existence of a private life for its citizens. A question to ponder upon, is whether surveillance is truly ethical or not? And if not, then could it be? Should citizens be worried about their privacy being invaded?



# **Questions a resolution must answer:**

1. Should surveillance in countries be increased?
2. Are governments justified when they say “if you have done nothing wrong, you have nothing to fear.”?
3. Can surveillance really be ethical? How so?
4. Does surveillance endanger one nation from the invasion of another?
5. Should governments be transparent about their surveillance activity?
6. How can private enterprises be restricted from extracting sensitive information about individuals?
7. Do the plus sides of surveillance outdo the downsides?

# POSITION PAPER GUIDELINES:

Font: Times New Roman

Font Size: 12

Position Paper Page Limit: One page (excluding bibliography) Position Paper Format

Page One:

Delegate Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Country : \_\_\_\_\_

Institution : \_\_\_\_\_

Topic : \_\_\_\_\_

‘A quote is preferred, not compulsory’

Paragraph one: Introduction to the topic and steps taken by the UN on the topic at hand.

Paragraph two: Elaboration on the country’s laws and policies regarding the topic and how it is affected by the topic at hand, its and measures incorporated by the country to combat the problem. Statistical Data is preferred.

Paragraph three: Unique solutions suggested by the delegate to combat the problem.

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Page two:

Bibliography -----

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