



General Assembly First Committee

Topic A: The Role of Science and Technology in Disarmament

The first General Assembly resolution to mention the topic of science and technology in disarmament dates back to 1988 in which Member States requested a report from the Secretary-General on future developments in this field and to evaluate its impact on global peace and security.¹ This included reports on specific types of technology, such as space, nuclear, material, and biotechnologies. In his most recent report to the General Assembly, Secretary-General António Guterres covered topics such as “artificial intelligence, autonomy and uncrewed systems, digital technologies, biology and chemistry, space and aerospace technologies, electromagnetic technologies and materials technologies.”² The UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), although independent from the UN itself, investigates and publishes essential research on this issue and international security.³ In 2022, UNIDIR explored the use of technology in monitoring and verifying remote ceasefires, and in 2023 they investigated ways to counter the diversion of small arms and light weapons.⁴ Additionally, the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs recently created the Youth 4 Disarmament Initiative which encourages the engagement of youth in technological innovations to further global disarmament.⁵

Topic B: Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity

In 2012, UN Member States and related stakeholders developed the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, creating the “first-ever systematic global strategy to protect journalists, which brings together UN bodies, national authorities, media, and civil society organizations.”⁶ Its implementation, as coordinated by the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), focuses on three fundamental aspects: prevention, protection, and prosecution.⁷ Along with General Assembly resolutions and UNESCO’s backing, many other UN entities assist in the protection of journalists around the world including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the Human Rights Council.⁸ The 10 year anniversary of this Plan of Action lead stakeholders to reaffirm and reinforce their commitments to raising awareness, standard setting and policy making, monitoring and reporting, capacity building, research, and coalition building.⁹

¹ <https://disarmament.unoda.org/topics/scienceandtechnology/>

² <https://undocs.org/Home/A/78/268>

³ <https://unidir.org/programme/security-and-technology/>

⁴ <https://unidir.org/work/science-tech-innovation/>

⁵ <https://youth4disarmament.org/>

⁶ <https://www.un.org/en/safety-journalists>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ <https://www.unesco.org/en/safety-journalists/un-plan-action>