

# **Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)**

## **Topic 2: Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles**

Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) are missiles that can transport their payloads to distances over 3,418 miles away—distances so long that they can travel between continents. While ICBMs can deliver biological and chemical weapons, the greatest threat that ICBMs generate is the ability of a nation to fire a nuclear warhead at long range with ease.<sup>1</sup> The difficulty and complexity of implementing missile defense systems to protect against these missiles compounds the challenge to international security that ICBMs engender.

Treaties currently in place to regulate the use and development of ICBMs include the Hague Code of Conduct (HCOG). HCOG, which went into effect in 2002, requires member countries to “provide pre-launch notifications (PLNs) on ballistic missile and space-launch vehicle launches (SLVs) and test flights...[and] submit an annual declaration (AD) of their country’s policies on ballistic missiles and space-launch vehicles.”<sup>2</sup> The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), which is a non-treaty association between governments, was created in an attempt to regulate the proliferation of ballistic missiles used for the purposes of delivering weapons of mass destruction.<sup>3</sup> The regime’s guidelines are composed of controls and regulations on the exports and transfers of various types of missiles and launch vehicles.<sup>4</sup>

After North Korea’s recent ICBM tests and accompanying threats, and the resulting tests by other nuclear nations, including Russia and the United States, the global threat that ICBM proliferation creates is stronger than ever. The increased range capabilities that the missiles offer

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<sup>1</sup><https://fas.org/nuke/intro/missile/icbm.htm>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.hcoc.at/?tab=what\\_is\\_hcoc&page=description\\_of\\_hcoc](http://www.hcoc.at/?tab=what_is_hcoc&page=description_of_hcoc)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/mtr>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/missile-technology-control-regime-mtr/>

could potentially give nuclear nations the ability to strike anywhere on earth with devastating results and raise the stakes of the international arms trade. As delivery methods for nuclear warheads, ICBMs are particularly concerning. Delegates will be faced with the challenge of addressing Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles and possible ways of minimizing the threat to international security they create.

Delegates should consider the following questions in preparation for the conference:

- Should ICBM proliferation and development be reduced in order to lower the the challenges to global security they create, or should ICBM proliferation be allowed to continue in order to allow nations to use the missiles for defensive purposes?
- Is a new treaty required to achieve these goals?
- Should changes be made to existing treaties and agreements to further regulate the production, transfer, and use of intercontinental ballistic missiles, their components, and means of launching them, or to allow for more proliferation?
- Should new methods be put in place to ensure compliance with new or existing regulations?
- What actions should be taken to counter the development and testing of ICBMs by North Korea and other states threatening international peace?