



AMMAN ACADEMY MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2026

United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC)



Balancing National Sovereignty and International Security in
Regulating Ghost Guns and Untraceable Firearms



Dear Delegates,

Regarding the use of ChatGPT in AAMUN'26, we will allow its usage as a **research engine only**. Please be aware that it was last updated in June 2024. Therefore, there is a high probability that it will provide you with incorrect information about the topic. If used, we encourage you to fact check the information to prevent any issues throughout the debate.

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Introduction

The fast progress of firearm manufacturing technologies has contributed to the rise of ghost guns, which are privately manufactured firearms that lack serial numbers and avoid traditional tracking devices. As their availability grows through online platforms and 3D printing technology, governments face new hurdles in preventing illegal use while maintaining national sovereignty and domestic regulatory authority. This issue investigates the balance between enhancing international arms control cooperation and protecting governments' rights to set their own firearm regulations, while also addressing the security dangers posed by untraceable guns.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), the major United Nations agency in charge of disarmament and international security concerns, provides an appropriate platform for addressing the challenges posed by ghost weapons and untraceable weaponry. The problem falls under the Commission's mandate, which is to promote international disarmament cooperation and reduce threats to peace and security. Through debate and cooperation among Member States, the UNDC can investigate solutions to mitigate the threats connected with untraceable firearms while ensuring that international initiatives respect individual states' sovereignty and local authority.

Delegates are therefore tasked with drafting resolutions aimed at establishing international regulations on the production, distribution and tracing of ghost guns while strengthening global disarmament efforts to address emerging weapons, technologies before they gradually undermine existing arms control systems.



Timeline

1968: The U.S. Gun Control Act is passed, establishing foundational federal oversight but allowing private citizens to manufacture firearms for personal use without a license or serial number.

1988: The Undetectable Firearms Act is enacted, making it illegal to manufacture, import, sell, or possess a firearm that cannot be detected by a standard metal detector.

2013: The world's first working 3D-printed pistol (the "Liberator") is successfully fired and shared online, marking the modern intersection of consumer additive manufacturing and untraceable weapons.

2017–2021: The commercial market for "80% receiver kits" (buy-build-shoot kits) surges. Law enforcement recoveries of ghost guns begin rising exponentially, increasing by over 1,500% nationwide during this broader period.

April 2022: The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) issues a Final Rule redefining "firearm" under federal law to include unfinished frames and receiver kits, requiring serial numbers and background checks.

June 2023: Law enforcement coordination, such as a major Canada-U.S. crackdown, seizes hundreds of illegal ghost guns and 3D printers across multiple provinces.

2024–2025: High-profile incidents keep ghost guns in the public eye, and the U.S. Supreme Court upholds the 2022 ATF regulatory framework on ghost gun kits in *Bondi v. VanDerStok*. Major component manufacturer Polymer80 settles multiple municipal lawsuits and shutsters operations.



March 2026: State-level efforts continue to tighten, such as new comprehensive ghost gun restriction proposals introduced in states like Minnesota to ban possession of unserialized frames



Major Parties Involved

USA: One of the most crucial countries in the ghost-gun debate because privately manufactured firearms are relatively common and firearm regulation is politically sensitive. In 2022, federal rules extended marking and record-keeping requirements for certain gun kits and privately manufactured firearms. Its particularly relevant to the sovereignty debate as any international regulation need to be balanced against domestic constitutional and legal protections for firearm ownership.

European Union: The European Union includes intensified policies requiring firearms and essential components to be distinctively marked and recorded so they can be traced. Ghost guns challenge these systems because they may be produced outside normal manufacturing and registration channels. The EU encourages stronger tracing, and information sharing.

United Kingdom: The UK includes rigid firearms laws that also apply to 3D printed firearms and they component parts. In 2025, a new law also introduced measured relating to digital templates that can be used to manufacture firearm components with 3D printers. Therefore, the UK represents a harsh approach to regulating both physical weapons and the technology used to produce them.

Canada: Canada has delt with Ghost guns and 3D printed firearms as an expanding security concern. In 2023, it launched offences centering computer data used for illegal firearm manufacturing. Its approach focuses on preventing illicit production and improving traceability.

UNODA: The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs reinforces international cooperation on small arms and new weapons technologies.



Since 2026, its technical expert work has included 3D printed, polymer and modular firearms.

UNODC: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime highlight illicit firearm manufacturing and trafficking. It had recognized that 3D printed guns can fall under existing firearm rules, while digital gun blueprints produce newer legal challenges.

INTERPOL: helps national police forces cooperate on cross-border firearm crime. It is particularly relevant because unsterilized firearms are harder to trace and investigate.



Previous Efforts

Updating Global Tracing Standards (ITI): Adapting the International Tracing Instrument to enforce distinctive markings on non-traditional materials (polymers) and important component parts (such as frames and receivers).

Expanding Treaty Coverage (UN Firearms Protocol): Using existing binding agreements to classify CAD/3D-printing plans and unsealed build kits as restricted manufactured materials.

Technical Guidance (UNODC): Providing member states with model laws to criminalise the unauthorised transfer of digital gun files and unmarked weapon kits while not violating larger state law.

Tracking Infrastructure (UNODA & INTERPOL): Helping systems like iARMS track cross-border flows of polymer parts and illegal 3D-printing networks.

Sovereignty Protection: Focuses solely on transnational trafficking and organised crime, rather than imposing internal civilian gun ownership rules.

Security Focus: Develops uniform technical norms (e.g., needing metal inserts in 3D printing for detection) while leaving legal enforcement to local countries.



Glossary

Ghost Gun: A privately manufactured firearm that typically lacks a serial number, making it difficult to trace.

Untraceable Firearm: A firearm that cannot easily be linked to its manufacturer, seller, or original owner.

CAD (Computer-Aided Design): Digital files used to create or design physical objects, including firearm components.

Serial Number: A unique identifying number placed on a firearm to help authorities trace its history.

Firearm Tracing: The process of identifying a firearm's origin, ownership, and movement.

Polymer: A lightweight material commonly used in manufacturing, including some firearm components.

iARMS: INTERPOL's system for sharing information and tracing illicit firearms across countries.

UN Firearms Protocol: An international agreement addressing the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms.

International Tracing Instrument (ITI): A UN framework establishing international standards for marking and tracing small arms and light weapons.

National Sovereignty: A state's authority to govern its territory and establish its own laws and regulations.

Digital Gun File: A digital design or blueprint that can be used to manufacture a firearm or firearm component.



Helpful Links/Works Cited.

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