

Delhi Public School
Jaipur
Model United Nations

UN SECURITY COUNCIL
Background Guide

Angad Singh
President

Isha Sheikh
Vice President

Harsh Bhardwaj
Rapporteur



Security Council
United Nations

AGENDA

*The Question of sovereignty
With a special emphasis on
Syria and the involvement of
non-state actors*

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear Delegates,

It is an honor to be serving as the Executive Board of the United Nations Security Council at DPSJMUN'18.

Please consider that the aim of this guide, as the name suggests, is to provide you with the background of the agenda solely. Your real research lies beyond this guide and we hope to see strong content and debate in the conference.

The agenda at hand is a highly sensitive and relevant issue, and a successful discussion on it would entail the collective participation of all of you. As far as the direction of the committee is concerned, it shall be entirely your prerogative.

Also, apart from simple knowledge of facts and figures that you gain while researching, analyzing and connecting to the same on a more intellectual and emotional level is necessary while approaching a crisis like this.

Lastly, put your best foot forward as you research into the varied aspects of the agenda and display the best of your diplomatic courtesy. Feel free to revert back to the executive board for any queries or for any form of assistance that you may require. Wishing you luck for the conference.

Good luck, looking forward to seeing you.

Angad Singh

President

Isha Sheikh

Vice President

THE SECURITY COUNCIL

MANDATE

The UN Charter established six main organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council. It gives primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council, which may meet whenever peace is threatened.

According to the Charter, the United Nations has four purposes:

- 1) to maintain international peace and security;
- 2) to develop friendly relations among nations;
- 3) to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights;
- 4) and to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations.

All members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. While other organs of the United Nations make recommendations to member states, only the Security Council has the power to make decisions that member states are then obligated to implement under the Charter.

MAINTAINING PEACE AND SECURITY

When a complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council's first action is usually to recommend that the parties try to reach agreement by peaceful means.

The Council may:

- 1) set forth principles for such an agreement;
- 2) undertake investigation and mediation, in some cases;
- 3) dispatch a mission;
- 4) appoint special envoys; or
- 5) request the Secretary-General to use his good offices to achieve a pacific settlement of the dispute.

When a dispute leads to hostilities, the Council's primary concern is to bring them to an end

as soon as possible. In that case, the Council may:

- 1) issue ceasefire directives that can help prevent an escalation of the conflict;
- 2) dispatch military observers or a peacekeeping force to help reduce tensions, separate opposing forces and establish a calm in which peaceful settlements may be sought.

Beyond this, the Council may opt for enforcement measures, including:

- 1) economic sanctions, arms embargoes, financial penalties and restrictions, and travel bans;
- 2) severance of diplomatic relations;
- 3) blockade;
- 4) or even collective military action.

A chief concern is to focus action on those responsible for the policies or practices condemned by the international community, while minimizing the impact of the measures taken on other parts of the population and economy

A NOTE ON RESEARCH AND PREPARATION

Delegate preparation is paramount to a successful and exciting Delhi Public School Jaipur Model United Nations 2018 Conference. We have provided this Background Guide to introduce the topics that will be discussed in your committee. These papers are designed to give you a description of the topics and the committee. This Guide is not intended to represent exhaustive research on every facet of the topics. We encourage and expect each delegate to fully explore the topics and be able to identify and analyze the intricacies of the issues. Delegates must be prepared to intelligently utilize their knowledge and apply it to their own country's policy. You will find that your state has a unique position on the topics that cannot be substituted by the opinions of another state.

The task of preparing and researching for the conference is challenging, but it can be interesting and rewarding. An essential part of representing a state in an international body is the ability to articulate that state's views in writing. Accordingly, it is the policy of DPSJMUN to require each delegate (or double delegation team) to write position papers. The position papers should clearly outline the country's policies on the topic areas to be discussed and what factors contribute to these policies. In addition, each paper must address the Research and Preparation questions at the end of

the committee Background Guide. Most importantly, the paper must be written from the point of view of the country you are representing at DPSJMUN 2018 and should articulate the policies you will espouse at the conference. All papers should be typed and double-spaced. The papers will be read by the President of the committee. Each delegation is responsible for sending a copy of their papers to the President via email on or before 7th July 2018.

POSITION PAPER GUIDELINES

Position papers are usually one to one-and-a-half pages in length. Your position paper should include a brief introduction followed by a comprehensive breakdown of your country's position on the topics that are being discussed by the committee. A good position paper will not only provide facts but also make proposals for resolutions. A good position paper will include:

- A brief introduction to your country and its history concerning the topic and committee;
- How the issue affects your country;
- Your country's policies with respect to the issue and your country's justification for these policies;
- Quotes from your country's leaders about the issue;
- Statistics to back up your country's position on the issue;
- Actions taken by your government with regard to the issue;
- Conventions and resolutions that your country has signed or ratified;
- UN actions that your country supported or opposed;

- What your country believes should be done to address the issue;
- What your country would like to accomplish in the committee's resolution; and
- How the positions of other countries affect your country's position?

INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA

Sovereignty is the power of a state to do everything necessary to govern itself, such as making, executing, and applying laws; imposing and collecting taxes; making war and peace; and forming treaties or engaging in commerce with foreign nations. It is ensured to all Member States of the United Nations in accordance to the United Nations Charter

The concept of state sovereignty provides foundation of a political order in which legally sovereign states have only the responsibility to respect each other's territorial integrity and to observe international agreements and conventions as they had voluntarily entered into.

THE UNITED NATIONS AND SOVEREIGNTY

The United Nations Charter (1945) recognizes all signatory states as sovereign. This grants the right of nations to be free from the interference of other states in their domestic affairs. However, it is important to note that the Charter asserts that state sovereignty can be overruled by the Security Council when the it determines that a state's actions threaten international peace and security. The protocol for the Security Council

intervention in such circumstances is outlined in Article(s) 41 and 42 of the Charter.

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

Though there is no legal definition of humanitarian intervention, it is important to establish what is meant by the phrase in terms of this topic. Humanitarian intervention may involve the use of force by a state (or group of states) against another country in order to prevent potential grave violations of the human rights of citizens, “without the permission of the state within whose territory force is applied” (Holzgreffe 18).

It is important to note the many possible variations of humanitarian intervention. As defined by the UN Charter, intervention can include:

“complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of Diplomatic relations” (UN Charter)

Thus, humanitarian intervention does not require armed force. However, in circumstances where non-military tactics fail, the United Nations Charter provides the legal right to the Security Council to authorize the use of “air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security”.

QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY

The maintenance of the historical understanding of sovereignty is a key argument against the modern expansion of humanitarian intervention. Though sovereignty has been a key source of national protection and international stability, it is important to consider how the norms and values of the international system have changed in the modern era. The spread of cultural, political and economic globalization makes it necessary for nations to cooperate more extensively in order to manage the world's economic and political systems. Globalization requires states to make sacrifices of economic and political sovereignty.

CURRENT SITUATION: EMPHASIS ON SYRIA

This section will provide background on some past conflicts in which humanitarian intervention was and was not carried out. It will also review current issues that the United Nations faces in relation to humanitarian intervention. It is important for the delegate to take note of the following events, and consider the various scenarios for conflict and humanitarian intervention. Specifically, at present, the state of Syria is locked in an increasingly violent civil war. Delegates are encouraged to keep track of developments in that conflict. They should acquaint themselves with the debate within the international community over whether or not there should be a humanitarian intervention in Syria and the ongoing conflict with the Islamic State (IS).

THE SYRIAN CRISIS

More than 465,000 Syrians have been killed in the fighting, over a million injured, and over 12 million - half the country's prewar population - have been displaced.

WHAT CAUSED THE UPRISING?

In 2011, successful uprisings - that became known as the Arab Spring - toppled Tunisia's and Egypt's presidents. This gave hope to Syrian pro-democracy activists. peaceful protests erupted in Syria as well, after 15 boys were detained and tortured for writing graffiti in support of the Arab Spring. The Syrian government, led by President Bashar al-Assad, responded to the protests by killing hundreds of demonstrators and imprisoning many more. In July 2011, defectors from the military announced the formation of the Free Syrian Army, a rebel group aiming to overthrow the government, and Syria began to slide into civil war.

While the protests in 2011 were mostly non-sectarian, the armed conflict surfaced starker sectarian divisions. Most Syrians are Sunni Muslims, but Syria's security establishment has long been dominated by members of the Alawi sect, of which Assad is a member.

INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION

Foreign backing and open intervention have played a large role in Syria's civil war. Russia entered the conflict in 2015 and has been the Assad government's main ally since then.

Regional actors: The governments of majority-Shia Iran and Iraq, and Lebanon-based Hezbollah, have supported Assad, while Sunni-majority countries, including Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia supported anti-Assad rebels.

Since 2016, Turkish troops have launched several operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as ISIS) near its borders, as well as against Kurdish groups armed by the United States.

Anti-ISIL coalition: The US has armed anti-Assad rebel groups and led an international coalition bombing ISIL targets since 2014.

Israel carried out air raids inside Syria, reportedly targeting Hezbollah and pro-government fighters and facilities.

US AND RUSSIA

The US has repeatedly stated its opposition to the Assad government backed by Russia but has not involved itself as deeply. Former US President Barack Obama had warned that the use of chemical weapons in Syria was a "red line" that would prompt military intervention.

In April 2017, the US carried its first direct military action against Assad's forces, launching 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles at a Syrian air force base.

One year later, despite Russian warnings, the US launched an attack together with France and the UK, at "chemical weapon sites".

CIA training: In 2013, the CIA began a covert programme to arm, fund and train rebel groups opposing Assad, but the programme was later shut down after it was revealed that the CIA had spent \$500m but only trained 60 fighters.

In September 2015, Russia launched a bombing campaign against what it referred to as "terrorist groups" in Syria, which included ISIL as well as anti-Assad rebel groups backed by the USA. Russia has also deployed military advisers to shore up Assad's defenses.

At the UN Security Council, Russia and China have repeatedly vetoed Western-backed resolutions on Syria.

PEACE TALKS

- **Geneva:** The first round of UN-facilitated talks between the Syrian government and opposition delegates took place in Geneva, Switzerland in June 2012.
- The latest round of talks in December 2017 failed amid a tit-for-tat between the Syrian government and opposition delegates over statements about the future role of Assad in a transitional government.

- **Astana: In May 2017, Russia, Iran and Turkey called for the setup of four de-escalation zones in Syria, over which Syrian and Russian fighter jets were not expected to fly.**
- **After denouncing plans to partition Syria in March 2018, a follow-up trilateral summit was held in Turkey to discuss the way forward.**
- **Sochi: In January 2018, Russia sponsored talks over the future of Syria in the Black Sea city of Sochi, but the opposition bloc boycotted the conference, claiming it was an attempt to undercut the UN effort to broker a deal.**

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INVOLVEMENT OF NON- STATE ACTORS

Since the conflict began, as a Syrian rebellion against the Assad government, many new rebel groups have joined the fighting in Syria and have frequently fought one another.

The Free Syrian Army (FSA) is a loose conglomeration of armed brigades formed in 2011 by defectors from the Syrian army and civilians backed by the United States, Turkey, and several Gulf countries.

In December 2016, the Syrian army scored its biggest victory against the rebels when it recaptured the strategic city of Aleppo. Since then, the FSA has controlled limited areas in northwestern Syria.

In 2018, Syrian opposition fighters evacuated from the last rebel stronghold near Damascus. However, backed by Turkey, the FSA took control Afrin, near the Turkey-Syria border, from Kurdish rebel fighters seeking self-rule.

ISIL emerged in northern and eastern Syria in 2013 after overrunning large portions of Iraq. The group quickly gained international notoriety for its brutal executions and its energetic use of social media to recruit fighters from around the world.

Other groups fighting in Syria include Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, Iran-backed Hezbollah, and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) dominated by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG).

ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND SYRIA

INTRODUCTION

Islamic state of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), also known as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, is an extremist jihadist terrorist organization, that holds control over a lot of territory in the Middle East. It declared the establishment of the 'Caliphate' in 2014-a state governed by the Caliph, in accordance with the Sharia law. Its present strength is unknown, but it is believed that IS has a lot of fighters from Western countries like US, UK, France and Germany.

IS believes that Muslims worldwide must give support to its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. It also believes that all other Islamic military groups must accept its supremacy. In the past few years, ISIS has become famous because of its videos of beheadings of civilians and soldiers, and its destruction of cultural heritage sites. Presently, it is operational in 18 countries around the world. Most of the territory of ISIS is located in Iraq and Syria. At its peak in 2014, ISIS used to hold over 100,000 square kilometers of territory. But now, it only holds around 52,700 kilometers. It claims to hold territory in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Algeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria, and North Caucus. Apart from this, ISIS also has control over many oil fields in Syria.

HISTORY

The creation of ISIS was the result of the the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. After the end of Sadaam Hussein's regime, many Sunni Muslims formerly loyal to him became jobless. Al Qaeda capitalized on the anger of these people and established Al Qaeda in Iraq to start an insurgency against the U.S troops. This was led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. This was the first out of the four stages in the development of the Islamic State in the Mesopotamian region.

In 2006, Islamic state in Iraq was established. This instigated a terrorist-guerilla campaign against the United States, its coalition allies and the Shi'ite population.

In 2011, after the departure of British troops from Iraq, the ISI was further strengthened, and it established a new branch in Syria. This created dissensions between the ISI and Al-Qaeda. Finally, it separated from Al-Qaeda and formed the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. This is the modern day terrorist organization, which has been active in various violent activities globally.

INVOLVEMENT OF RELIGION IN ISIS

The very name of ISIS suggests the link of the organization to religion. However, the Shia-Sunni conflict is the most important factor in ISIS's resurgence. Sunnis and Shias are two Islamic groups which differ with each other in ideologies and interpretations. They have

different traditions and customs. While they agree with each other in matters related to the Quran, they have different opinions on the hadith.

The ISIS has mainly Sunni Muslims. When ISIS came to power, it put Sunni sectarianism at the heart of its propaganda. They want to establish a Sunni caliphate with the goal of exterminating all the Shias.

ISIS has been responsible for human rights abuse and war crimes. Amnesty International has reported cases of ethnic cleansing by the group against Shia Muslims.

ISIS tends to explain all its actions with Islamic scriptures. It would be unfair to equate the Islamic and ISIS ideology, because many ISIS beliefs go against the Prophet's teachings. For example, the Quran condemns senseless violence towards others as in Quran 5:8 and 2:190. One of the verses of the Quran says "whoever kills an innocent person it is as if he has killed all of humanity." This indicates that Islam is not to be blamed for the activities of ISIS.

CURRENT SCENARIO

Iraq's government announced in December 2017 that its war against IS was over, almost four years after the group first seized parts of the country.

That month also saw Russia's President Vladimir Putin announce a partial withdrawal of Russian troops from

Syria, after IS was left controlling only a few pockets of land.

The capture of Raqqa by a US-backed alliance of Syrian Kurdish and Arab fighters in October was seen as a major victory in the battle against IS. The city was the de facto capital of the "caliphate" the group declared.

A few months earlier, in July 2017, Iraqi government forces retook the second city of Mosul, which fell to IS in 2014 when militants routed the Iraqi army.

At its peak, some 10 million people were living in territory under IS control.

An intensive aerial bombardment by the US-led coalition helped secure victory in Raqqa for the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which was formed in 2015 by the the Kurdish Popular Protection Units (YPG) militia and a number of smaller, Arab factions. Since early June, coalition planes have carried out almost 4,000 air strikes on the city.

Estimates of the number of casualties vary. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a UK-based monitoring group, said at least 3,250 people had been killed, among them 1,130 civilians. Other groups say the total was higher.

The UN estimates about 270,000 people fled their homes during the SDF offensive.

The immense task of rebuilding the city may take years. Clearing operations are already under way to uncover any jihadist sleeper cells and remove landmines.

The top US commander in Iraq has also urged the government to "reach out and reconcile with the Sunni population" to prevent "ISIS 2.0 from emerging".

As IS is now being forced out of Iraq and Syria, another problem is the likely resurgence of hostilities between rival groups. In October 2017, Iraqi forces pushed Kurdish Peshmerga fighters back from land they took during the fight against IS around Kirkuk.

HOW DOES ISIS FUND ITSELF?

Oil was once the biggest single source of revenue for IS. The group seized control of many oil fields in Syria and Iraq, and sold oil on the black market.

But revenue has fallen since IS lost control of oil-producing areas in northern Syrian and western Iraq, and US-led coalition and Russian air strikes began targeting oil infrastructure.

Income from taxes and fees has also fallen as IS has lost control of major cities like Mosul and Raqqa. Money obtained by looting and fines initially increased, especially when IS seized Mosul in 2014, but has since declined.

At one point, IS was reported to be so short of funds that it was imposing random fines for offences like driving on the wrong side of the road.

According to a report by IHS Markit, territorial losses are the main factor contributing to IS's loss of revenue. It says the group's ability to compensate for financial losses by increasing the fiscal burden on the population it controls appears to have reached its limits.

LINKS FOR REFERENCE

➤ **Article 2: UN Charter**

<https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-i/index.html>

➤ **Article 42 and 43: UN Charter**

<https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-vii/index.html>

➤ <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/dilemma-humanitarian-intervention>

➤ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/10/history-hezbollah-israel-syria-161031053924273.html>

➤ <https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2016/02/syria-russia-fist-160225053929748.html><https://www.vox.com/2018/4/1/17225190/syria-trump-russia-attack-war-strike-response>

➤ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/russia-veto-syria-resolution-170413004627326.html>

➤ <http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Syria/FinalCommuniqueActionGroupforSyria.pdf>

- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2012/sc10609.doc.htm>

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