

United Nations Security Council (2021) Background Guide

Chair: Ishaan Masand

Email: masandi@bc.edu

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Letter From the Chair

Delegates,

Welcome to the UNSC!

My name is Ishaan Masand, and I am so excited to be your Chair for the United Nations Security Council, in the 9th session of EagleMUNC conference. I'm from Edison, New Jersey, and I am a Finance and Business Analytics major in the Carroll School of Management at Boston College. I have been participating in Model UN since my freshman year of high school, and I am delighted to be continuing my involvement at BC. Some of my personal hobbies and interests include world politics, all things sports (Go Celtics), and trying different international cuisines. Outside of Model UN, I am a part of the Analyst Program for the Investment Club, and also I serve as the head of PR and Marketing for the AHANA Management Academy.

I am really looking forward to working with all of you, and hearing all of your ideas about the topics. As delegates in the UNSC, you are all given the power to make a real difference in the conflicts that we will be discussing. While you do your research and prepare for the conference, I want to remind you that you are representing a country, so please adhere to the political and social views of your respective nations for the duration of the conference. It is extremely important for us to work together to make this committee as enjoyable, realistic, and effective as possible. I want to ask all of you to maintain decorum throughout the duration of the conference, and respect all other delegates and their viewpoints.

There will be numerous crisis updates throughout the weekend, so please come prepared with research on your countries and on these topics beyond what is explained in the background guide. The UNSC has been very active in intervening in crises around the world, so I encourage all of you to research and understand the specific powers of the UNSC, as well as some of the missions they have conducted in recent years.

A word of advice for our committee, the chosen topics for this year are focused toward conflicts in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa, so it would be very beneficial for you to understand your respective nation's relation to countries in the regions. After participating in Model UN for several years, I have learned that the most important part of the conference is the research you do beforehand, so please come prepared to debate and also to have a good time! I look forward to meeting all of you. Stay safe, and happy researching!

Sincerely,

Ishaan Masand, UNSC Committee Chair

Historical Background

Following the conclusion of the First World War, the United States President Woodrow Wilson gave his Fourteen Points speech in which he expressed his desire to create an international body in which all future conflicts could be addressed, discussed, and moderated before sparking armed warfare. Realizing this dream, the League of Nations was formed in 1919 on the basis of Wilsonian thinking, peaking with over fifty-eight members originating from all six populated continents.¹ However, despite proposing and spearheading development of the charter, Wilson was not able to convince both houses of Congress to approve the increasingly isolationist United States' membership in the organization, undermining both the power and credibility of the League in the eyes of the world.

Despite the League of Nations' best efforts, the agreement that inspired the creation of the League indirectly led to its downfall. Many historians believe that the Treaty of Versailles, which formally concluded the First World War, and the stipulations outlined therein, inspired the rise of Fascist Nazi Germany, whose vengeful attitude towards Versailles led to a virtually unchecked expansionist foreign policy which initiated the Second World War upon its invasion of Poland. Ironically, the League of Nations, the body designed to deliver "peace in our time," was not able to simmer the flames of war, and indirectly led to the bloodiest conflict in human history, where eighty million lives were lost in six years². Even before Imperial Japan surrendered on the deck of the USS Missouri, it was decided that the League would be dissolved and replaced with a more powerful and respectable global institution. To fully establish this new

¹ "The League of Nations." PBS, Public Broadcasting Service, www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/wilson-league-nations/.

² "The Failure of the League of Nations and the Outbreak of War in 1939." Bartleby. Accessed 1n.d.. <https://www.bartleby.com/essay/The-Failure-of-the-League-of-Nations-PKQ9LWZVC>.

body as a reputable governing body, the United States, as well as its communist contemporary, the Soviet Union, would both have to become cornerstone members.

On June 26th, 1945 delegations from fifty nations convened in San Francisco, California to outline a document which would become the de jure constitution of establishment for the UN Charter.³ Entering the June UN Charter into force, on October 24th, 1945 the United Nations was officially born after ratification by the five permanent members of the Security Council and 46 other states.⁴ Poland was not present at the conference but was officially considered part of the original fifty-one signatories, as its membership was confirmed shortly thereafter.

Along with the establishment of the United Nations on October 24, 1945, the United Nations Security Council (“UNSC”) was formed from parameters outlined in the UN Charter⁵. Occupying one of the six main bodies of the United Nations and meeting first on January 17, 1946 in Westminster, London, the UNSC has taken “... primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security... [and] may meet whenever peace is threatened”.⁶ Today, the Security Council takes up residence at the United Nations Headquarters in the Turtle Bay neighborhood, in New York City.

Membership in the Security Council is split between fifteen total states, five maintaining permanent membership status, and the remaining ten occupying two-year rotating membership status.⁷ Upon fulfillment of term requirements, the United Nations General Assembly elects

³ “History of the United Nations.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/en/sections/history/history-United-Nations/index.html.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ “Charter of the United Nations.” United Nations. United Nations. Accessed In.d.. <https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>.

⁶ “Security Council, SC, UNSC, Security, Peace, Sanctions, Veto, Resolution, President, United Nations, UN, Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution, Prevention.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/en/sc/about.

⁷ “Charter of the United Nations.” United Nations. United Nations. Accessed In.d.. <https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>.

states to fill vacated positions left by non-permanent members. Resolution 1991 A (XVIII) enacted in 1963 stipulated that rotating members must meet four geographic requirements:⁸

1. Five states from Africa and Asia
2. One state from Eastern Europe
3. Two states from Latin America
4. Two states from Western Europe

As of January 1st, current members are as follows (term expiration as year in parentheses)^{9:10}

Permanent Members	Current Rotating Members - Region	Veto Power
China	Ireland ('22) - Western Europe	China
France	Tunisia ('21) - Asia/Africa	France
Russia	Vietnam ('21) - Asia/Africa	Russia
United Kingdom	Mexico ('22) - Latin America	United Kingdom
United States of America	Norway ('22) - Western Europe	United States of America
	Kenya ('22) - Asia/Africa	
	Estonia ('21) - Eastern Europe	
	St. Vincent and the Grenadines ('21) - Latin America	
	Niger ('21) - Asia/Africa	
	India ('22) - Asia/Africa	

⁸ "Security Council, SC, UNSC, Security, Peace, Sanctions, Veto, Resolution, President, United Nations, UN, Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution, Prevention." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/en/sc/members/

⁹ "UN General Assembly Elects 5 New Security Council Members." Xinhua. Accessed 1n.d.. http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-06/08/c_138125159.htm.

¹⁰ "2021-2022 UN Security Council Elections and the Responsibility to Protect - World," ReliefWeb, June 18, 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/2021-2022-un-security-council-elections-and-responsibility-protect>.

The Security Council allows non-member states to sit in on committee discussion if the UNSC deems said states' interests are of merit and may be affected by drafted policy, so long as the states agree to forgo voting rights. Similarly, UNSC members and non-members alike may potentially be allowed to sit in on discussion so long as they are privy to the dispute at hand and agree to waive voting rights.¹¹

Though the Security Council describes its role as the international body responsible for furthering global peace and dissuasion of hostile conflict, such a description only scratches the surface of its true purpose. Pulled directly from the UN Charter, the UNSC sees its four main purposes as follows; the maintenance of international peace and security, further development of friendly relations between nations among the global community, cooperation in the solution of international issues whilst meeting the promotion of human rights, and to provide the nucleus for further harmonization of the actions of nations.¹² The UNSC involves itself on only select missions which qualify as the most urgent as well as adherent to these four purposes. The United Nations has given only the Security Council the power to obligate members to enact policies agreed upon in committee sessions under the UN Charter.

To enforce its actions and policy decisions, the Security Council may undertake any number of just actions in the hope that its goals are met in a swift and dignified manner. In the interest of maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council may:¹³

- ❖ Set forth principles and parameters for agreement
- ❖ Investigate and or mediate any issue if deemed appropriate

¹¹ “Security Council, SC, UNSC, Security, Peace, Sanctions, Veto, Resolution, President, United Nations, UN, Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution, Prevention.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/en/sc/members/

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

United Nations Security Council

- ❖ Dispatch missions
- ❖ Appoint special envoys
- ❖ Request the intervention of the Secretary General if need be to aid in the meeting of settlements

If the aforementioned measures are neither effective nor forceful enough to meet the goals of the Security Council in the resolution of an issue, the UNSC may:

- ❖ Prevent further escalation to armed confrontation by issuing ceasefire directives
- ❖ Deploy military observers or peacekeeping forces (Blue Helmets)
- ❖ Enact economic sanctions, arms embargoes, financial penalties, and travel bans
- ❖ Sever diplomatic relations
- ❖ Enforce a Military blockade
- ❖ Engage in collective military action (UN peacekeepers as well as medical and resource support for dire situations)

Ideally, the United Nations and its apparatuses, including the Security Council, would like to achieve omnipotent and omnipresent effectiveness. Yet, in a complicated world of conflict and ethnic tension, perfection in the dissuasion of violence is an ideal rather than accepted practice. While not universally successful, Security Council intervention has produced results in geographically diverse conflicts surrounding a myriad of issues. Peacekeeping operations are specified in the United Nations Charter as either Chapter VI or Chapter VII peacekeeping mandates. Chapter VI is known as the Pacific Settlement of Disputes and outlines that the United Nations may deploy its peacekeeping units without deliberate specification of

which Chapter of the Charter is being fulfilled¹⁴. Chapter VII is known as Action with Respect to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace and Acts of Aggression and outlines that the Security Council must decide which Chapter is being acted upon, what the legal basis of action is, and how security and public order is lacking in maintenance in the deployment region. Peacekeeping operations have been successful in hotbeds of hostility including Burundi, Cambodia, Haiti, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and the former eastern European region of Yugoslavia.¹⁵ Similar to war, no situation survives Murphy's Law (anything that can go wrong, will go wrong), and operational success is never perfect or complete for all stakeholders; however, success on UNSC Mandates often involves improving (to varying degrees) the regional humanitarian and political situation.

A specific example of Security Council peacekeeping success pacified the East African state of Cote D'Ivoire, where the UN accomplished its mandate and objectives by early June 2017. Following the initiation of a 2004 civil war, the United Nations deployed over 12,000 peacekeepers to the struggling nation, and to date, many specific measurables have been met. Successful free elections are continuing to be held, human rights violations decreased by nearly five-hundred percent over a five-year period, a quarter million refugees have returned safely, and the nation has championed nearly eight percent GDP growth year over year on average since the conclusion of hostilities, resulting in the small African nation being elected to and serving on the UNSC.¹⁶

¹⁴ "Charter of the United Nations." United Nations. United Nations. Accessed 1n.d. <https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>.

¹⁵ "Our Successes Peacekeeping." *United Nations*, United Nations, peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-successes

¹⁶ "GDP Growth (Annual %)." *GDP Growth (Annual %) Data*, World Bank, data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG.

Topic 1: Crisis in Kashmir

Background

In 1846, Great Britain sold the region of Kashmir to a wealthy man named Gulab Singh, in what came to be known as the Treaty of Amritsar. Singh then created his own title of a



“Maharaja,” and subsequent rulers of the region would inherit this “Maharaja” title within the family. Great Britain ruled over Pakistan and India for a large portion of their history, but both countries were finally able to declare their independence in

1947.¹⁷ At this time, there became three separated areas: India, Pakistan, and a small region called Kashmir. Hari Singh, then the Maharaja of Kashmir, made the decision to remain an independent state from both India and Pakistan, forming its own individual laws and culture.¹⁸ However, Pakistan did not acknowledge or respect this independence, and moved to invade Kashmir. Indian military forces assisted the small region in fighting off the invasion, helping keep the peace and independence of Kashmir.²⁰



¹⁷The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. “Kashmir.” Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., October 31, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kashmir-region-Indian-subcontinent>.

¹⁸ PHOTO Jain, Bharti. “Govt Releases New Political Map of India Showing UTs of J&K, Ladakh: India News - Times of India.” The Times of India. TOI, 2019. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/govt-releases-new-political-map-of-india-showing-uts-of-jk-ladakh/articleshow/71867468.cms>.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ PHOTO “Hari Singh.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, July 26, 2020. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hari_Singh.

After this intervention by India, Hari Singh made the conscious decision to sign the Instrument of Accession on October 26, 1947, to officially become a state in India. Once again, Pakistan failed to acknowledge or respect this decision by Kashmir, and ignited a war with India over the jurisdiction of the Kashmiri region. Two years later, in 1949, the line of control was established, which clearly marked a ceasefire between the two countries over the region. A mere six years later marked the start of the second war between India and Pakistan over jurisdiction over the Kashmir region. At this point in the conflict over Kashmir, India and Pakistan had control over their respective areas of the region, respectively labeled as India-administered Kashmir and Pakistan-administered Kashmir.²¹

Since this point in history, there has not been another official war between Pakistan and India over the region of Kashmir, but there has been constant and consistent violence at the line of control, along with many violent attacks between the nations. Over the years there have been



numerous efforts to create peace and come to an agreement over the disputed regions, but no such discussion has ever been successful. As the tensions between the two countries are higher than ever, a new conflict has come to light in India-administered Kashmir. With a new party

²¹The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Kashmir." Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., October 31, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kashmir-region-Indian-subcontinent>.

(BJP) and prime minister in power in India, the Indian constitution has been changed with regards to control over Kashmir, and there is now more unrest in the region than ever before.²²

Kashmiri Exodus

There is a great deal of skepticism at India's current control over India-administered Kashmir, but there is an untold story behind the internal violence in the region that has built up to the current state of the situation. In 1990, there was a mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits (Hindus) from their homeland. This exodus was sparked by the murder of Tika Lal Tapoo by Muslim militants.²³ Tika Lal Tapoo was an outspoken activist, protecting Hindus in Kashmir, and his murder was a threat to all Hindus in the region. On January 19th of 1990, Muslims gathered on the streets of Kashmir, and violently forced Hindus out of their homes. These rioters gave all the Hindus of Kashmir an ultimatum: to convert to Islam, leave their home and Kashmir, or die. This day is still remembered as one of the darkest points in the history of Kashmir. The dynamic of the region completely changed, as more than 300,000 Hindus were forced to leave Kashmir, and hundreds of Hindu civilians including women and children were raped and killed by the Muslims that forced them out of their own homes.^{24,25} The torture of Hindus in Kashmir did not stop there; since that horrific day in 1990, there have been multiple instances of Muslim extremists in Kashmir terrorizing and massacring small villages of Hindus, including women and

²²Blackmore, Erin. "The Kashmir Conflict: How Did It Start?" National Geographic, August 5, 2019.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/2019/03/kashmir-conflict-how-did-it-start/>

²³ "Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits: What Happened on January 19, 26 Years Ago?" India Today, January 19, 2016.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/fyi/story/exodus-of-kashmiri-pandits-january-19-jammu-and-kashmir-304487-2016-01-19>

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ PHOTO Bose, Joydeep, ed. "Kashmiri Pandits Mark 30th Year of Exodus from Valley; Demand Immediate Resettlement, Action against Perpetrators." DNA India, January 19, 2020. <https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-kashmiri-pandits-mark-30th-year-of-exodus-from-valley-demand-immediate-resettlement-action-against-perpetrators-2809999>.

children.²⁶ This religious persecution has been met with minimal resistance by the Indian government due to an article in India's constitution. Article 370 gives the state of Kashmir a special status, providing the region with autonomy from India, and the freedom to create their own laws. Because of this non-interventionist article in the Indian constitution, Muslims have continued to occupy Kashmir, not allowing Hindus to return to their land. For decades, this was the situation in Kashmir, but a new era of political leaders in India are making controversial efforts to change the narrative.²⁷



The BJP

The Bharatiya Janata Party is the current political party in power in India, as their candidate, Narendra Modi, was elected as Prime Minister in India's 2014 general elections.²⁸ The origins of the BJP reach back to 1951, when it was originally established as a party encouraging a nationalist society in coherence with the Hindu culture. The BJP as it is known today was

²⁶ "Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits: What Happened on January 19, 26 Years Ago?" India Today, January 19, 2016. <https://www.indiatoday.in/fyi/story/exodus-of-kashmiri-pandits-january-19-jammu-and-kashmir-304487-2016-01-19>

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ PHOTO "BJP Welcomes Decision to Notify 'Strategic Areas.'" Greater Kashmir. GK News Network, July 19, 2020. <https://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/jammu/bjp-welcomes-decision-to-notify-strategic-areas/>.

established in 1980, continuing its advocacy of a unified country.²⁹ The party prides itself on the idea of *hindutva*, which creates a political viewpoint looking to align the culture of the nation with the Hindu religion. The BJP gained popularity in the 1990s, by spreading pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim sentiment.³⁰ In December of 1992, the Babri Masjid, a significant and sacred place of worship for Muslims, was destroyed by groups that had ties to and affiliations with the BJP. After this occurrence, the party held rallies with symbols of Hindu gods in an effort to restore peace by bringing people together with the Hindu culture.³¹

The first Prime Minister from the BJP was elected in 1998. Prime Minister Vajpayee had originally planned to put an end to the conflict between India and Pakistan over the state of Kashmir, but resigned before he was able to make any real impact; as a result as a loss of majority in the government, decision makers were unable to come to an agreement. After being absent from the headlines for nearly 15 years, the BJP finally made its return to political power in 2014 when Narendra Modi ran a historic campaign for prime minister, winning by one of the largest margins in the history of India's general elections. Prime Minister Modi and the BJP took unprecedented action that sparked controversy around the world, and changed the dynamic of the Kashmiri crisis.³²



²⁹“Bharatiya Janata Party.” Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., December 17, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Bharatiya-Janata-Party>.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi took his position as prime minister in 2014. Along with major efforts to change the poverty issue in India, Modi also took action regarding the situation in Kashmir.³³ The main call for action came in late 2016, when Burhan Wani, a military official in Kashmir, was killed. This sparked an immense amount of conflict in Kashmir, and the region had reached its breaking point. The now Muslim majority region was pushing for a caliphate, a government structure based on the religion of Islam, with a singular ruler that is a successor of the prophet Muhammad. This push for the independence of Kashmir would leave both Pakistan and India in a losing position.

In recent years, Modi has made strides to integrate Jammu (India-administered Kashmir) into Indian society.



From the point of his election in 2014, there has been an increase of Kashmiri-Muslim integration into India in regard to politics, education, and economics. However, this action has only brought more unrest and uncertainty to India about the future of the situation with Kashmir. Kashmir has become a breeding ground for terrorist organizations to recruit young, Muslim boys to join their cause.³⁴ Many of the terrorist

³³ PHOTO “PM Modi Speaks to Seven CMs on Floods, Covid-19 Situation: India News - Times of India.” The Times of India. Times of India, July 20, 2020. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/pm-modi-speaks-to-seven-cms-on-floods-covid-19-situation/articleshow/77057006.cms>.

³⁴“Viewpoint: Why Modi's Kashmir Move Is Widely Supported in India.” BBC News. BBC, August 15, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-49354697>.

attacks of the last three decades can be traced back to organizations and cells based out of Kashmir. Because of the violence and brewing terrorism in the region, Modi and the current Indian administration made the decision to revoke Article 370, and take a more hands-on approach with their control over Jammu and Kashmir. The way in which this control has been exerted has brought extreme national and international backlash against Modi and the current administration.³⁵

Current State of India-administered Kashmir

After India revoked the autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019, the Indian army was sent into the region to squash any riots or violent protests that would come as a result of the controversial decision.³⁶ Since this time, there have been many protests in Kashmir, and Indian military forces have been given permission to use metal pellets and rubber bullets to subdue large crowds and potentially violent riot gatherings. Because of the power that the Indian army has in the area, there have been many instances of civilian women and children that have been seriously injured, blinded, or even killed as collateral damage from this method of crowd control. Not only has India engaged the military in Jammu and Kashmir, but they have also cut all of their means of communication, including all access to the internet.³⁷ This was all done in an effort to minimize communication between terrorist and radical organizations in the region, but has clearly had immense collateral damage, and made for terrible living situations for the people

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Khoja-Moolji, Shenila. "Puncturing Resistance, One Pellet at a Time." India | Al Jazeera. Al Jazeera, January 22, 2018. <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/pellets-rubber-bullets-humane-180121091441483.html>.

³⁷ Gettleman, Jeffrey, Suhasini Raj, Kai Schultz, and Hari Kumar. "India Revokes Kashmir's Special Status, Raising Fears of Unrest." The New York Times. The New York Times, August 5, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/05/world/asia/india-pakistan-kashmir-jammu.html>.

of Jammu and Kashmir.³⁸ This unrest continues to the present day in India and Kashmir, and another war is on the brink of becoming a reality between Pakistan and India, with Kashmir stuck in the middle. In such a complicated and layered conflict, it is difficult to see how to proceed toward a region of peace and coherence for everyone.

Delegate Initiative

There are several main ideas that should be addressed throughout the committee before the committee decides to move forward with a resolution. It



should first be discussed and determined the rights and jurisdictions of all involved parties. Kashmiri citizens, as well as the Indian and Pakistani governments, are all entitled to their respective areas of the region as per the current and historical situation.

Another consideration is the sentiment of the Kashmiri population. In the midst of this crisis between two global powers, the world has neglected the needs and opinions of the citizens of this disputed territory. There may not be one simple solution to this issue, but first the voices of the Kashmiri people need to be acknowledged and understood.



³⁸“Support for Terrorism Nearly Wiped out in Jammu and Kashmir, People Want Peace: Senior Army Officer.” Deccan Herald. DH News Service, June 7, 2020. <https://www.deccanherald.com/national/north-and-central/support-for-terrorism-nearly-wiped-out-in-jammu-and-kashmir-people-want-peace-senior-army-officer-846723.html>.

Another point to focus on is the return of the Hindu population to Kashmir after they were forced out of their homes in 1990. There are still thousands of refugees from the exodus, waiting to return back to their homeland. The last main idea to consider is the underlying cause of this dispute between India and Pakistan. These two countries have had a longstanding feud since the British rule ended in South Asia, and with constant conflict between the powers, Kashmir has become yet another unresolved conflict. To create peace in the region, there are many underlying issues that have to be addressed.³⁹

The direction of this committee should be toward a better civilization for the Kashmiri people, and for sustainable peace in the region. This end goal can be accomplished in a number of ways.

Questions to Consider:

- *How much of a role did Pakistan play in the unrest in India-administered Pakistan?*
- *What is the overall opinion of the Kashmiri people about where they see the peaceful future of Kashmir?*
- *Is the Indian government's occupation of India-administered Pakistan justified, or should it be considered a human rights violation?*
- *What, if any, is the relevance of the Indian and Pakistani nuclear arsenals on this issue?*
- *Does Kashmir have the resources to be able to thrive as an independent state?*

Topic 2: Qatar-Gulf Crisis

Background

International trade systems are the foundation of the global economy, and the Middle East plays a large role in this system. The Gulf Cooperation Council consists of a political and

³⁹ "Kashmir Profile - Timeline." BBC News. BBC, August 6, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-16069078>.

economic alliance of countries in the Middle East including Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, and The United Arab Emirates.⁴⁰ The purpose of the council is to establish “unity among its members based on their common objectives and similar political and cultural

identities, which are

rooted in Arab and

Islamic cultures.”⁴¹

The Gulf Cooperation

Council was

established in May

1981 and since then,

its members have

been working together

to tackle economic

and security issues.

The council works to

strengthen relations

and encourage cooperation with the neighboring countries. The member countries of the Gulf

Cooperation Council “represent an important region from a trade point of view and were the

EU’s fourth largest export market in 2016.”⁴²



⁴⁰ PHOTO “Gulf Cooperation Council.” Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., May 18, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gulf-Cooperation-Council>.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴²“European Commission Directorate-General for Trade.” Gulf region - Trade - European Commission. Accessed July 31, 2020. <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/gulf-region/>.

The countries mutually benefit from their alliance due to the trade avenues that they share with each other. In 2017 the GCC was faced with an internal issue regarding Qatar, one of the members of the council. According to the Gulf states, Qatar had a continuous history of supporting terrorist groups which clearly went against the ideals of the council.⁴³ As a result, three of the member countries of the GCC announced that they were going to cut diplomatic ties with Qatar, which ultimately led to the Qatar diplomatic crisis. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain severed relations with Qatar and gave Qatari citizens 14 days to leave their territory, even going as far as to ban their own citizens from traveling to or residing in Qatar⁴⁴. In addition to the three countries, Egypt also announced that they would be cutting diplomatic ties with Qatar.



In an effort to mend relations with Qatar, the GCC extended 13 demands to the country, including restrictions on Qatar’s diplomatic relations with other countries as well as financial reparations for damage caused by Qatar’s policies. Qatar responded and refused to comply with the demands, as they felt that the accusations against them were baseless. Since then, the remaining member countries of the GCC and Qatar have been adjusting to this new dynamic. The GCC still consists of the original countries it was originally formed with, with the singular exclusion of Qatar. In the midst of this conflict in the GCC, Qatar has shifted its economic and

⁴³ PHOTO “GCC.” الأمانة العامة لمجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية، July 23, 2020. <https://www.gcc-sg.org/en-us/Pages/default.aspx>.

⁴⁴“Qatar Crisis: What You Need to Know.” BBC News. BBC, July 19, 2017. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40173757>.

political focus to forge a newfound alliance with Turkey and Iran, an alliance that has pushed Saudi Arabia and Qatar even further apart.

Beginning of the Blockade

There were multiple events leading up to the diplomatic collapse, most involving Qatar's support of political Islamic movements. Qatar has always had a foreign policy that differed in priorities from its neighbors and the GCC.⁴⁵ Although tensions started between Qatar and its neighbors much earlier, the main events leading up to the boycott occurred in 2014 and 2017. In 2014, a previous diplomatic rift had developed after "Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain pulled out their diplomats, claiming that Qatar supported armed groups."⁴⁶ There are two main issues involving Qatar that the GCC did not approve of, one being Qatar's support for Islamist groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, and possibly some militant groups linked to al-Qaeda.⁴⁷ Although Qatar has admitted to providing assistance to groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, they deny any allegations connecting them to militant groups linked to al-Qaeda. The other issue

⁴⁵ Bouoiyour, Jamal, and Refk Selmi. "The Gulf Divided: Economic Effects of the Qatar Crisis." StackPath, January 13, 2020. <https://theforum.erf.org.eg/2020/01/13/gulf-divided-economic-effects-qatar-crisis/>.

⁴⁶ "Qatar Blockade: Five Things to Know about the Gulf Crisis." Al Jazeera. Al Jazeera, June 5, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/qatar-blockade-gulf-crisis-190604220901644.html>.

⁴⁷ PHOTO "Is Qatar Defying the Gulf Blockade?" Global Village Space, June 19, 2019. <https://www.globalvillagespace.com/is-qatar-defying-the-gulf-blockade/>.

is Qatar's relations with Iran, as Iran is Saudi Arabia's biggest rival due to conflicting ideas on culture and religion.⁴⁸

The main event that led to these countries cutting ties with Qatar occurred on May 23, 2017. On the Qatari state news agency's website, hackers posted false remarks to the emir of



Qatar, praising Iran and criticizing US foreign policy.⁴⁹ This news came only days after US President Donald Trump attended the 2017 Riyadh summit to meet members of the Gulf

Cooperation Council and other Arab and Muslim countries. This sparked a diplomatic breakdown, as most members of the GCC already viewed Qatar's views and foreign policy as controversial. On June 5, 2017, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Egypt all officially announced that they would be ending diplomatic relations with Qatar, including economic trade. This was a major step in the development of the conflict, as it formalized the boycott in the eyes of the world, and pushed the situation further away from a solution. This then led to Saudi Arabia closing the land border with Qatar, and all the countries imposing a land, sea and air embargo on Qatar. The four countries felt that Qatar was too closely linked to terrorism, Iran and unnecessarily meddled in internal affairs of other countries. Qatar responded and claimed that

⁴⁸“Qatar Crisis: What You Need to Know.” BBC News. BBC, July 19, 2017. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40173757>.

⁴⁹“Qatar Blockade: Five Things to Know about the Gulf Crisis.” Al Jazeera. Al Jazeera, June 5, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/qatar-blockade-gulf-crisis-190604220901644.html>

there was “no legitimate justification” for the blockade and that it would work to ensure that Qatari citizens and residents were not affected by it.⁵⁰

Al Jazeera



Al Jazeera is an independent news organization, one of the few in the Middle East, and receives part of its funding from the Qatari government.⁵¹ One of the factors that led to the blockade was complaints about the left leaning Al Jazeera Media Network inciting violence. Along with Facebook, Al Jazeera played a large role in circumventing state media agencies during the 2010-2011 Arab Spring. Al Jazeera is one of the most popular news outlets in the world, but it often sparks controversy for its political biases and its unwillingness to comply with typical censorship for media in neighboring countries.⁵² The blockading countries even included shutting down Al Jazeera in their 13 point list of demands. On May 24, Saudi Arabia and the UAE blocked Al Jazeera’s website, with many other countries such as Jordan following suit.⁵³

13 Point List

In June of 2017, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates proposed a plan to finally end this boycott between Qatar and these nations. The plan to end the boycott was contingent on Qatar complying to a list of 13 demands from its neighbors, and accepting this agreement in the next ten days. The demands were as follows:

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ PHOTO “Al Jazeera English.” YouTube. YouTube. Accessed August 2, 2020.
<https://www.youtube.com/aljazeeraenglish>.

⁵² Batrawy, Aya. “Understanding the Al-Jazeera Controversy.” York Dispatch. AP, August 8, 2017.
<https://www.yorkdispatch.com/story/money/business/2017/08/08/understanding-al-jazeera-controversy/104408262/>.

⁵³ Chughtai, Alia. “Understanding the Blockade against Qatar.” Qatar | Al Jazeera, June 5, 2020.
<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2018/05/understanding-blockade-qatar-180530122209237.html>.

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- The newly developed socioeconomic relationship with Iran would have to be revisited to adhere to the trade sanctions that have been put into place by allies of the GCC
- Close all military ties with Turkey, along with the stoppage of construction for the Turkish military base.
- End all relations with terrorist organizations. Saudi Arabia and other allies in the GCC believed that Qatar was involved with such groups, namely the Muslim Brotherhood, ISIL, Hezbollah, etc.
- Cut off all funding to organizations that are regarded as terrorist groups by the GCC or the United States.
- Capture known terrorists residing in Qatar and send them back to their original countries for them to be prosecuted.
- Cease all operations of the Al Jazeera news network based out of Qatar.
- End the practice of granting Qatari citizenships to fugitives from neighboring countries.
- Appropriately compensate for all of the damage done by Qatari government affiliated groups since the beginning of the Qatar boycott.
- Adjust all Qatar military and socioeconomic policies to become coherent with those of allies in the GCC.
- End all relations with entities opposing the political systems in any GCC nations.
- Cut all government funding to news networks that Qatar has funded in the past, and terminate their production.
- Agree to all of the terms in this list within 10 days.

- Comply with periodic audits by allies in the GCC to ensure the adherence of the Qatari government with all of the terms in the list.⁵⁴

Given the magnitude of this list, and the significant changes that this would require Qatar to undergo, Qatar immediately rejected this list, seeing it as an infringement on its sovereignty. This ended the GCC's peacemaking efforts with the boycotted nation. Since the rejection of these terms, Qatar has strengthened its ties with Turkey and Iran, increasing tensions and making peace between the country and the GCC seem all the more hopeless.⁵⁵

Qatar, Turkey, Iran Involvement

The blockade has had a major economic impact on all parties involved, as they previously held an economic alliance under the Gulf Cooperation Council. Despite the boycott, Qatar's economy improved significantly in 2018, after the 2017 diplomatic rift.⁵⁶ The International Monetary Fund reportant a 2.2% growth in Qatar's GDP in 2018, which was a significant increase from its growth rate when the boycott took place in 2017.⁵⁷ Since the falling out between Qatar and its neighboring countries, Qatar has taken steps to forge new unofficial alliances with Iran and Turkey to build the resiliency of its economy. On December 3, 2018, Qatar announced that it would pull out of OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Companies), an organization that forms a strong economic coalition of nations with oil-based economies, including nations involved in the boycott such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Iran,

⁵⁴ Dwyer, Colin. "Neighboring Arab Nations Slap Qatar With 13-Point List Of Demands." NPR. NPR, June 23, 2017. <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/06/23/534079045/neighboring-arab-nations-slap-qatar-with-13-point-list-of-demands>.

⁵⁵"Arab States Issue 13 Demands to End Qatar-Gulf Crisis." Qatar News | Al Jazeera. Al Jazeera, July 12, 2017. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/06/arab-states-issue-list-demands-qatar-crisis-170623022133024.html>.

⁵⁶ PHOTO "Iran, Turkey Sign Deal with Qatar to Ease Gulf Blockade - Latest News." Hürriyet Daily News, November 27, 2017. <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/iran-turkey-sign-deal-with-qatar-to-ease-gulf-blockade-123132>.

⁵⁷"Qatar Blockade: Five Things to Know about the Gulf Crisis." News | Al Jazeera. Al Jazeera, June 5, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/qatar-blockade-gulf-crisis-190604220901644.html>.

Turkey, and Qatar struck a deal to create new economic ties and trade systems within their countries and resources, which proved beneficial to Qatar, as they were able to quickly fill the gap in their economy that appeared when the GCC severed ties with the nation.⁵⁸



Delegate Initiative

One of the main topics to focus on is the fundamental reason behind this boycott. It is important to address that Qatar has already apologized for its support of the Muslim Brotherhood, and has denied all other accusations from Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern nations in the bloc. Another main point is to address the future of Turkey and Iraq after this boycott is lifted. If the relations between Qatar and Saudi Arabia do end up in a better place, Turkey and Iraq will again be ostracized by the other Middle Eastern countries, and their ties with Qatar that have been developing over the last three years will be loosened. If Saudi Arabia's reconciliation with Qatar is contingent upon them cutting ties with Iran and Turkey, this will disrupt the peace in the region even further, and only increase tensions.

⁵⁸“Qatar-Iran-Turkey Alliance Erodes Regional Security - Arab Weekly.” Ahval, December 17, 2018. <https://ahvalnews.com/qatar-turkey/qatar-iran-turkey-alliance-erodes-regional-security-arab-weekly>.

It is in the best interest of the world as a whole for Qatar to reconcile with Saudi Arabia and the other Middle Eastern countries in the bloc, as a significant portion of their economies rely on each other. With better relations in the region, there will be more hope for peace, therefore leading to more opportunity for economic growth for the powers. The rest of the world also benefits from better relations between Saudi Arabia and Qatar, as trade can revert back to normal and prices of Middle Eastern goods can be regulated again. The Middle East is rich with natural resources and other specialty items that the rest of the world depends on, and with better relations between the two countries, the entire world can reap the benefits, Qatar and Saudi Arabia included.

Questions to Consider:

- *How does this internal conflict in the Middle East affect trade partners all around the world?*
- *What is the significance of good relations between Saudi Arabia and Qatar?*
- *How will the economies of the two countries change if this conflict is eventually resolved?*
- *Who stands to benefit the most from the betterment of the relations between Qatar and the other Middle Eastern countries?*
- *How have the economies of the Middle Eastern countries adjusted to this major change in trade?*

Topic 3: The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

Background

Nagorno-Karabakh is a region located in Azerbaijan, but claims independence from the country. With a population consisting of more than 90% Armenians, the nearby nation of Armenia has strong ties with the region, initiating conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Conflict began when the Soviet Union's power was lost in Armenia and Azerbaijan in 1988. The two countries went to war over border disputes and territorial complications, and the war finally came to an end six years later.⁵⁹



At this point, the Nagorno-Karabakh region was named as a de facto independent state, which meant that the central government of Azerbaijan had minimal control over the sub-

⁵⁹“No Chance of Breakthrough on Nagorno-Karabakh.” Warsaw Institute, November 12, 2019. <https://warsawinstitute.org/no-chance-breakthrough-nagorno-karabakh/>.

autonomous state. The Nagorno-Karabakh region has been home to ethnic conflict for centuries, as the original occupants were both Christian Armenian and Turkic Azeris, which caused constant clashes until Soviet occupation of the region in the 1920s. After World War I, the Soviet Union had devised a new “divide-and-rule” plan to extend their dominance even further. This is what originally divided the Nagorno-Karabakh region from the rest of Azerbaijan. The complication in the region was that it had a majority Armenian population, yet it was technically located inside the borders of Azerbaijan.⁶⁰

Development of a Ceasefire

Near the end of Soviet power, the Nagorno-Karabakh’s autonomous governing body elected for the region to officially accede to Armenia. This sparked major conflict in the area, and over twenty thousand people died in the violence between Armenians and Azeris in the



⁶⁰“Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker.” Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed August 2, 2020. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/nagorno-karabakh-conflict>.

region. Given Armenians constituted the majority in the area, they were able to push their agenda on the region, so much so that they also ended up controlling territory in Azerbaijan beyond the borders of Nagorno-Karabakh, allowing for a path to and from the Armenian border.⁶¹

After the Soviet Union finally officially lost its power in 1991, the Nagorno-Karabakh region declared independence from both nations, but this declaration was not recognized internationally, and the region is still not regarded as an independent state.⁶² There was still a lot of violence occurring from the conflict between Azeris and Armenians in the region, but a recognition of the Armenian majority caused most Azeris to leave from Karabakh, and most Armenians to leave other regions in Azerbaijan.⁶³ A few years later, in 1994, a ceasefire was signed that officially gave the ethnic Armenians in Karabakh control over the region as well as the territory around it. The sensitivity of the situation makes it complicated for to move towards peace, and after multiple efforts over the years, Armenia and Azerbaijan have still not restored ties over the conflict in the region, and therefore tensions often increase to the point where the ceasefire is broken.⁶⁴

Ceasefire Violations

The line of contact that marks the ceasefire between Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan has experienced constant fighting and breaches in the peace agreement



⁶¹ PHOTO “Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, August 1, 2020. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nagorno-Karabakh_conflict.

⁶²“Nagorno-Karabakh Profile.” BBC News. BBC, April 6, 2016. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18270325>.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

since 1994.⁶⁵ Although there have been multiple Russian mediated meetings between Azerbaijani and Armenian officials, there have been no significant strides towards reconciliation or peace for the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Both sides of this conflict keep heavily armed troops along this line of contact as well as in other hotly contested regions near Nagorno-Karabakh, as conflict can break out at any point.⁶⁶ With all of the violations of the ceasefire, there also seems to be a pattern: neither side takes responsibility for the initiation of the breach.⁶⁷ This constant controversy fuels the tensions between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and results in a standstill in the peacemaking process. In recent years, these violations have escalated into genuine threats by both sides to engage in more significant violence than has already ensued in the region.

Both Azerbaijan and Armenia have made direct threats to one another regarding very serious potential attacks. The Azerbaijan Defense Ministry spokesman publicly stated the following: “The Armenian side mustn't forget that the state-of-the-art missile systems our army has are capable of launching a precision strike on the Metsamor nuclear power plant, and that would be a huge tragedy for Armenia.”⁶⁸⁶⁹ The Metsamor nuclear power plant is of great importance for the people of Armenia, given that it is the country’s main power source. Armenia is a landlocked country, which significantly limits the nation’s capabilities to expand and use other sources of energy. This plant is a mere 20 miles from the city of Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, home to over a million people. In addition, the proximity of the plant is also

⁶⁵ PHOTO “No Chance of Breakthrough on Nagorno-Karabakh.” Warsaw Institute, November 12, 2019. <https://warsawinstitute.org/no-chance-breakthrough-nagorno-karabakh/>.

⁶⁶“Nagorno-Karabakh: Timeline Of The Long Road To Peace.” RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty. Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, February 2, 2012. <https://www.rferl.org/a/1065626.html>.

⁶⁷<https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2020/07/16/world/europe/ap-eu-armenia-azerbaijan-1st-ld-writethru.html?login=email&auth=login-email>

⁶⁸ PHOTO “Armenian Nuclear Power Plant.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, March 25, 2020. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armenian_Nuclear_Power_Plant.

⁶⁹<https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2020/07/16/world/europe/ap-eu-armenia-azerbaijan-1st-ld-writethru.html?login=email&auth=login-email>

dangerously close to the Turkish border, which could pose major relation complications.⁷⁰ The plant is obviously very essential to daily society in Armenia as a source of power, but is also a serious risk in the event of its destruction. Its

significance makes Azerbaijan's threat to attack it all the more dangerous. Armenia has also made threats to Azerbaijan, claiming that they have the potential to attack one of Azerbaijan's main freshwater reservoirs. This threat has more impact than it may initially



sound, given the current water crisis in Azerbaijan.⁷¹ Azerbaijan is in severe condition regarding its access to clean water, and efforts by the World Bank to solve this crisis has helped, but there is still a large percentage of the population in the country that lives with minimal access to clean water. This is due to a very small number of rivers and reservoirs in the nation, making clean water very valuable in Azerbaijan. The threats from both countries could be very dangerous and would have an immense detrimental impact on millions of Armenian and Azerbaijani citizens, making it all the more urgent for peace to be brought between the two countries over the Nagorno-Karabakh region.⁷²

War in 2016

⁷⁰Lavelle, Marianne. "Is Armenia's Nuclear Plant the World's Most Dangerous?" National Geographic, May 17, 2016. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/energy/2011/04/110412-most-dangerous-nuclear-plant-armenia/>.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Aliyev, RAE Z H. "Challenge of Water Shortage in the World and Azerbaijan and Scientific Practical Solution." Lupine Publishers. Lupine Publishers, May 25, 2018. <https://lupinepublishers.com/ocean-journal/fulltext/challenge-of-water-shortage-in-the-world-and-azerbaijan-and-scientific-practical-solution.ID.000122.php>.

In early April of 2016, the Nagorno Karabakh region experienced the most significant ceasefire violation since its agreement in 1994. According to Armenian authorities, in an effort to regain lost territory, Azerbaijan started the brutal attack on civilians as well as the military defense forces in Nagorno Karabakh. Azerbaijan, on the other hand, claims that it was in fact Armenian forces that initiated the attack with heavy artillery.⁷³ The result of the four day war is also disputed; Azerbaijan claims to have reclaimed two villages in the region, yet Armenia has rejected this notion.⁷⁴ After the war, Azerbaijan came under heavy fire from the rest of the world, as many instances of war crimes from the 2016 war came to light. Azerbaijani forces were accused of the torturing of Armenian civilians in Nagorno-Karabakh, as well as many unjustified executions. The most disturbing aspect of the war crimes was that it is believed to have come as an order from officials in the Azerbaijani military. Azerbaijani forces attacked three main areas of the region, and these crimes were apparent in all three of the areas, in very similar fashion. These war crimes were committed on 90% of Armenian citizens that were captured by Azeri forces during the four days. Based on International Humanitarian Law, Azerbaijan is held accountable for these war crimes, and is required to correctly regulate their armed forces based on these actions.⁷⁵ The inhumane acts committed by Azerbaijani forces proved to be the biggest

⁷³ PHOTO Toal, Gerard, and John O'Loughlin. "Here Are the 5 Things You Need to Know about the Deadly Fighting in Nagorno Karabakh." The Washington Post. WP Company, April 6, 2016. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/04/06/will-war-erupt-in-nagorny-karabakh-here-are-the-5-things-you-need-to-know/>.

⁷⁴ "Nagorno-Karabakh Violence: Worst Clashes in Decades Kill Dozens." BBC News. BBC, April 3, 2016. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35949991>.

⁷⁵ "Artsakh Ombudsman's 'Second Interim Report on Atrocities Committed by Azerbaijan during the 2016 April War': Karabakh Facts: A Comprehensive Database of Documents on Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict, Its History and Peace Process." Karabakh Facts | A comprehensive database of documents on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, its history and peace process, April 26, 2019. <https://karabakhfacts.com/artsakh-ombudsmans-second-interim-report-on-atrocities-committed-by-azerbaijan-during-the-2016-april-war/>.

violation of the ceasefire since 1994. The death toll of the conflict is not specified, but the violence this situation signifies is not a good sign or indication of peace for the future.⁷⁶

Delegate Initiative

A main topic that should be addressed in the committee is the political demographic of the region and the countries around it. Georgia and Armenia have both made major strides into becoming real democracies and maintaining peace. However, Azerbaijan continues to threaten military force upon Armenia over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh. Although the region has diverse backgrounds, there is a large Armenian population. The democracy of Armenia seems like the most attractive option for the people living in the disputed



region as of right now. Another major point to focus on is that Azerbaijan has the military

⁷⁶ Toal, Gerard, and John O'Loughlin. "Here Are the 5 Things You Need to Know about the Deadly Fighting in Nagorno Karabakh." The Washington Post. WP Company, April 6, 2016. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/04/06/will-war-erupt-in-nagorny-karabakh-here-are-the-5-things-you-need-to-know/>.

capabilities to go to war with Armenia over this region, so members of the UNSC must be careful in handling this situation so that further conflict is not instigated. The region surrounding this area as well as the world as a whole, is moving toward a period of peace, and Armenia is one of the leaders in this movement. It is important that this region be handled carefully, so that democracy can continue to spread across the globe.⁷⁷

The Nagorno-Karabakh region has been in favor of joining as an Armenian state since the departure of Soviet rule in the late 20th century. Azerbaijan will obviously be very opposed to any action trying to aid Armenia in this crisis, so definitive solutions and reasons as to why this disputed territory should belong to Armenia are essential. The demographic of this region is very diverse and unique, and independence from both countries might be the most plausible and beneficial step for all parties involved in the dispute. This could be a feasible situation because the people of the region would be able to practice their religions and experience their cultures, free from the rule of any country.

Questions to Consider:

- *Is there any chance that Azerbaijan will make a shift toward democracy and peace in the near future given the movements occurring in surrounding nations?*
- *How large of a role do bordering nations in the region such as Georgia have in this dispute over the territory?*
- *Does the overall sentiment of the citizens of the disputed territory still lean towards joining Armenia as an official state?*
- *Is Azerbaijan expected to react with military force? Will the country ever perform on their threats against Armenia?*

⁷⁷ “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests.” EveryCRSReport.com. Congressional Research Service, March 11, 2010. <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL30679.html>.

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- *What would be the role of the United Nations if Azerbaijan took military action against Armenia over the disputed region?*



Topic 4: Crisis in the Central African Republic

Background

Many countries in Africa are victim to rebel and militia groups that unlawfully govern over specific areas, and treat their citizens inhumanely. The Central African Republic currently epitomises that issue. The nation has been plagued with violence and has minimal infrastructure or any effective form of structured government.⁷⁸ Major conflict occurred in the nation early in 2013, when the president, Francois Bozize, was not only forced out of office, but exiled from the Central African Republic by a rebel group called the Seleka Rebel Coalition.⁷⁹ The Seleka Rebel Coalition consists of a majority of Muslim militants, and are known for committing egregious human rights violations on civilians in the nation. The power that they gained when they took over from President Bozize caused the start of a downward spiral for the nation.⁸⁰ The Human Rights Watch has reported numerous cases of civilian executions as well as other human right violations committed by the Seleka coalition during their short reign over the country. When the Seleka coalition came into power, there was anarchy across the country, especially in the capital city of Bangui. There was instability, violence, and widespread looting that made the CAR one of the most dangerous countries in the world at the time. The coalition fell apart in September of 2013, but the country still did not see any effective form of a

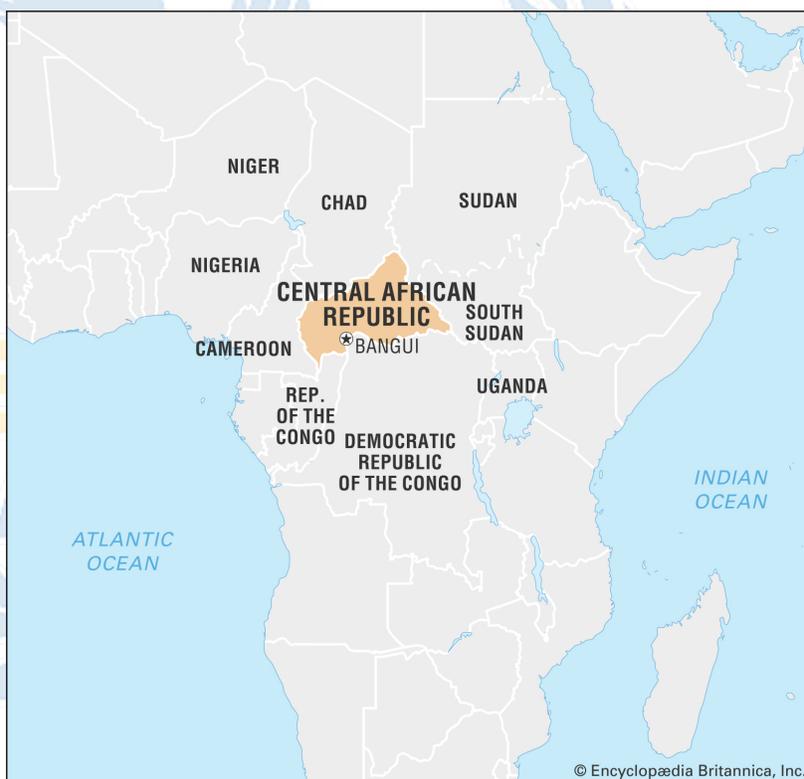
⁷⁸ PHOTO O'Toole, Thomas E., and Tamara Lynn Giles-Vernick. "Central African Republic." Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., October 24, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Central-African-Republic>.

⁷⁹ "Central African Republic: the Conflict in Focus." Conciliation Resources, December 1, 2016. <http://www.c-r.org/programme/east-and-central-africa/CAR-conflict-in-focus>.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

structured government. Instead there was more violence from conflicts between the Anti-Balaka and Ex-Seleka coalitions.⁸¹

The Anti-Balaka coalition found its origin in the Central African Republic as a group that took pride in standing for self-defense against violence and corruption.⁸² Most members of the Anti-Balaka were Christian, which reflected the Christian majority in Bangui, and helped them gain support throughout the nation.⁸³ The anti-Balaka coalition has had many conflicts with the ex-Seleka coalition since the beginning of the 2013 crisis, and thousands of civilian deaths have resulted from the violence. While the anti-Balaka coalition may have originally formed with the goal of defending the citizens and civilians of CAR, the mission transitioned into something much more violent.⁸⁴ From the public



⁸¹ Ibid.

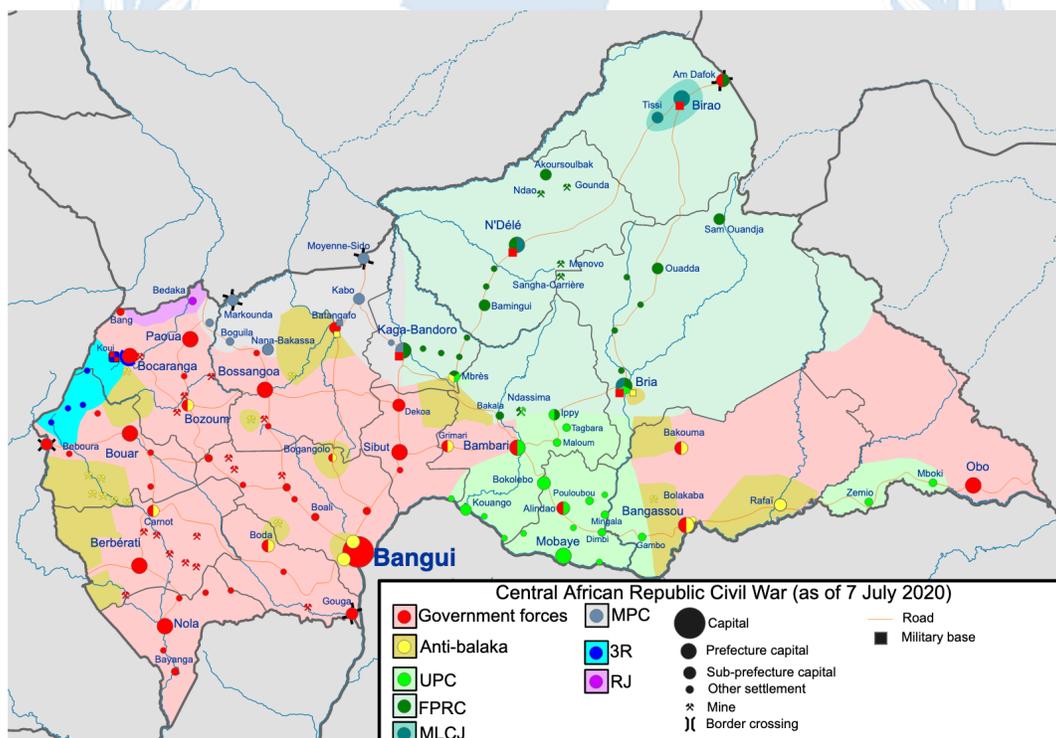
⁸² PHOTO “bleasdale_2.Jpg.” Pulitzer Center. Accessed August 2, 2020. <https://pulitzercenter.org/file/bleasdale2jpg>.

⁸³“Central African Republic: Rebels Executing Civilians.” Human Rights Watch, October 12, 2018. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/10/12/central-african-republic-rebels-executing-civilians>.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

hatred of the Seleka coalition, the anti-Balaka coalition started to commit violent attacks on not only ex-Selekas, but also Muslim civilians.⁸⁵ Thousands of Muslims have been forced to leave the country, and thousands more are still currently displaced across the nation. Aside from these two major coalitions, there are hundreds of other local militia groups, fighting each other everyday for territory in the Central African Republic, displacing almost 600,000 people all over the country in search of peace.⁸⁶⁸⁷

2017



Peace Agreement

⁸⁵ Pike, John. "Military." Anti-Balaka. Accessed August 2, 2020. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/anti-balaka.htm>.

⁸⁶ PHOTO "Central African Republic Civil War (2012–Present)." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, July 16, 2020. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_African_Republic_Civil_War_%282012%E2%80%93present%29.

⁸⁷ "Violence in the Central African Republic | Global Conflict Tracker." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed August 2, 2020. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-central-african-republic>.

In the Central African Republic, there was a peace treaty signed in 2017 that has proved to be absolutely ineffective to all efforts for peace in the country. The UN had also involved itself to try and demilitarize regions in CAR, but rebel groups continued to terrorize over their respective regions, especially in the city of Bangui. There is minimal government control in this region, and the militia groups of Ex Seleka and Anti Balaki are reigning over CAR, making it impossible for any economic or political safety to occur.⁸⁸ Millions of people in CAR are in need of humanitarian assistance, and more people are dying every day caught in the middle of militia battles over land.⁸⁹ The peace treaty in 2017 was an effort by the CAR government, which only effectively governs about a third of the nation, to bring peace to the country by calling for a ceasefire among all of the major rebel militant groups. The deal included a contingency that all coalitions would be given official political representation if the violence ended. These efforts were promising, but it came as no surprise when violence broke out soon after the ceasefire was called.⁹⁰ Since the failure of these efforts, the UN has tried to intervene with Peacekeepers, but these efforts have also failed to have a positive impact.⁹¹ The presence of peacekeepers in Bangui sparked a misconception for the Seleka coalition that the UN forces were trying to take all weapons away from Muslims, and this led to even further violence and conflict. The violence caused by this misunderstanding resulted in over twenty dead, with the addition of a UN

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ “CAR Government Signs Peace Deal with Rebel Groups.” Central African Republic News | Al Jazeera. Al Jazeera, June 19, 2017. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/06/car-government-signs-peace-deal-rebel-groups-170619175516668.html>.

⁹¹ PHOTO “More than Sectarianism in Central African Republic Conflict.” BORGEM, November 30, 2017. <https://www.borgenmagazine.com/sectarianism-central-african-republic-conflict/>.

peacekeeper. Clearly, humanitarian efforts face major resistance in the region, making it even harder for peace to be brought to the Central African Republic.⁹²

Delegate Initiative

Another potential main idea to focus on would be the extent of the United Nations' involvement in the region. UN Peacekeepers have been deployed in the region in the past, but these interventions

have resulted in lives lost on both sides of the situation. The region has been militarized by hundreds of rebel



groups, and it is not the duty of UN Peacekeepers to fight on the front lines against militias.

There is an immense amount of unrest in the region, and the situation has to be handled very gently, as the solution to this issue will be very long and complicated.⁹³ Before any action can take place, the committee needs to be clear on the intentions of all the rebel groups, and understand that there are many underlying factors that cause this unrest.⁹⁴

Questions to Consider:

- *What are these rebel groups fighting for?*

⁹² “Violence in the Central African Republic | Global Conflict Tracker.” Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed June 3, 2020. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-central-african-republic>.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ “Violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo | Global Conflict Tracker.” Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed June 3, 2020. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-democratic-republic-congo>.

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- *Does the government of the Central African Republic have ties to the illegal arms trade throughout the continent?*
- *What is the end goal of the millions of displaced persons across the two countries?*
- *How can these two countries economically and politically grow in the midst of all of this unrest?*
- *What is the most effective way to utilize UN peacekeeping forces in the region, without causing further unrest?*



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