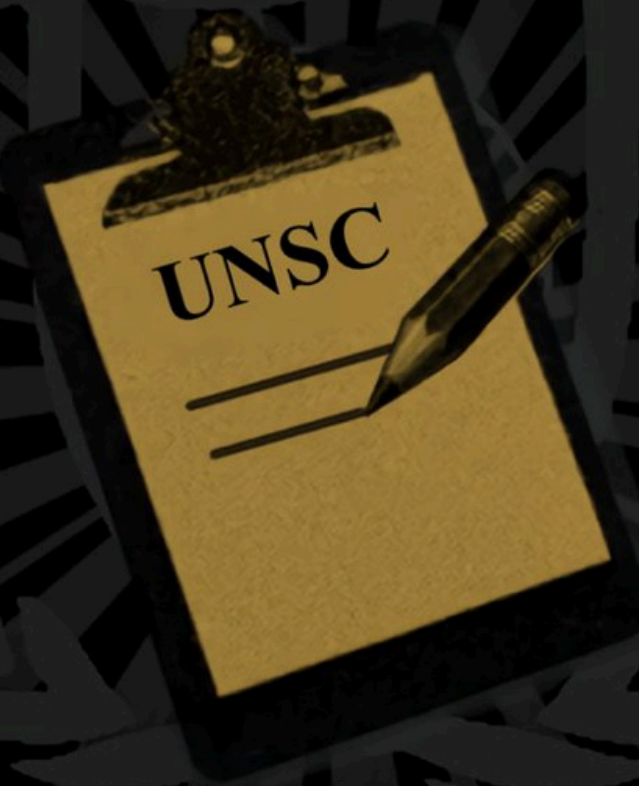
BACKGROUND GUIDES



WESMUN
2026

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Letter from the DIAS

Dear Delegates,

It is with immense pleasure that we welcome you all as members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) at the Wesgreen International School Model United Nations (WESMUN) 2026. As your chairs for this year's UNSC committee, we are thrilled to have you as a part of this committee, and we hope to provide you with the opportunity of engaging in thought-provoking and enjoyable discussions.

Due to the fast-paced and influential nature of this committee, your leadership, diplomacy, and strategy will be challenged through a captivating agenda to ensure you push your limits as delegates and partake in productive conversations regarding real-world issues. As delegates of UNSC, you have the opportunity to look forward to learning about real-world UNSC diplomacy, representing national interests professionally, and working under pressure in a high-stakes committee to develop impactful and realistic resolutions.
At this year's conference, the UNSC committee will focus on and discuss deeply relevant and significant issues surrounding protecting international peace amid transnational terrorism and extremist networks, as well as assessing the geopolitical and security implications of foreign military bases in conflict-affected regions.

This background guide has been prepared to assist you in gaining an understanding of the topics and will act as a foundation for your research. However, we deeply encourage you to conduct your own research and arrive well-prepared, as this background guide should not be your sole source.

We encourage you all to engage in this journey with optimism and utilise this incredible opportunity to grow as individuals as we are looking forward to and expecting productive debates, active participation, and strong resolutions that show real impact and change.

We wish you the best of luck with your preparations and hope that this experience inspires you and leaves you with lessons to carry beyond this conference. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us using the email address added below.

Committee Email - unsc@wesmun.com

Best Regards,

Mishall Shahid, Antony Michael, and Ekansh Punjabi.
Chairs of UNSC.

Introduction to committee

The United Nations Security Council serves as a primary body of the United Nations, with the objective of fostering peace and stability globally. Since 1945, the Security Council has been the origin of many achievements, some of which include providing security, responding during crisis situations, and giving their overall support.

Structure of the UNSC:

- The Council constitutes 15 member states, including 5 permanent members (China, United States, Russia, United Kingdom, and France).
- Permanent membership grants a country the right to veto (veto power explained below) and table resolutions.

Powers and Functions:

- Imposing Sanctions: The Council can impose economic sanctions, arms embargoes, or travel bans on countries violating international law.
- Authorizing Military Action: This is the most significant power. The Council can authorize the use of force, including deploying peacekeeping missions.
- Admission of New Members: The Council recommends to the General Assembly which states should become UN members.
- Recommending the Secretary-General: The Council recommends candidates for the position of UN Secretary-General to the General Assembly.

Introduction to committee

The UNSC is the only UN body where resolutions are binding legally on all member states. The Charter grants the UNSC the unique right to form decisions that all member states are required to comply with.

However, binding does not guarantee compliance, as enforcement depends on:

1. Political Will: The commitment from institutions and key leaders to enact, prioritize and enforce specific policies or reforms considering facing the burden of costs or opposition.
2. Alignment Among Major Powers: Countries forming closer ties in various aspects such as economically, politically, and militarily on the basis of shared interests.
3. Willingness to Commit Resources: Being prepared and ready for the allocation of assets at any given time such as money, people, time, or equipment that would impact a project, cause, a specific goal.

It is made clear that decision-making is shaped by alliances formed to ensure compliance among member states, prevent conflicting decisions, and create leverage. Such leverage arises when certain countries face limiting factors that others do not, allowing non-limiting advantages to be strategically exercised. Veto threats must also be taken into account before any decision is made. Consensus among member states is frequently achieved not through adherence to core values or long-term objectives, but through political manoeuvring, pragmatic compromises, or settling for the least objectionable option in order to move forward.
Delegates are therefore expected to think and manoeuvre strategically within these constraints, as feasibility is often the determining factor and is more likely to lead to a successful outcome. Implicitly, the failure of a resolution to pass should itself be understood as a political outcome.

Introduction to committee

VETO POWER:

UNSC outcomes are usually decided before a resolution paper is put upon a vote, as formal voting is the final procedural step and not the decision point. By the time a resolution has reached voting procedures, its fate is often already clear. This occurs during informal negotiations where signals of veto are exchanged between member states and veto members, determining whether a resolution is even worth tabling. As a result, many drafts never reach the floor due to the anticipation of vetoes.

When veto members signal red lines by expressing concerns regarding specific resolutions, these "red lines" usually relate to:

1. Authorization of force
2. Condemning or explicitly naming specific member states or actors
3. Language that would impact and affect intervention or sovereignty.

These red lines are typically communicated indirectly, with concerns framed diplomatically rather than as explicit veto threats. However, such signalling can escalate into threats where a veto member withholds support until changes satisfying their position are made. Even a single veto threat can cease negotiations entirely; therefore, delegates must account for veto risk even when it is not explicitly stated, ensuring that P5 members can comply with the resolution.

Veto threats disproportionately affect resolution sponsors. Smaller states often co-sponsor resolutions to gain political protection, while P5 members selectively select sponsors to avoid the risk of public defeat. Consequently, UNSC decision-making is driven more by anticipation than confrontation, with avoiding a veto frequently prioritised overachieving maximal outcomes.

Veto power shapes every stage of UNSC decision-making. Delegates are expected to anticipate objections early, prioritise enforceable compromises, and avoid language likely to trigger a veto. As such, veto power should be treated as a crucial point of negotiation skill, demanding strategic thinking and realism in UNSC diplomacy.

Agenda 1: Protecting International Peace Amid Transnational Terrorism and Extremist Networks

Introduction to the Agenda

Over the past two decades, transnational terrorism has transformed from a threat posed by territorially rooted, hierarchical organisations into an adaptive global phenomenon directly engaging the authority of the United Nations Security Council. According to the Global Terrorism Index 2024, over 90% of terrorist attacks and 98% of terrorism-related deaths now occur within active conflict zones, placing these threats squarely within the Council's mandate under Article 39 of the UN Charter, and highlighting the deep entanglement between armed conflict, governance collapse, and extremist violence. This shift has been accompanied by the fragmentation of established groups such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda into regional affiliates, autonomous cells, and lone actors capable of operating across borders, often without direct command structures. While these groups may lack conventional military strength, their ability to exploit instability, weak institutions, and global communication networks allows them to pose persistent threats to international peace and security.

This evolution complicates the Council's traditional counterterrorism mechanisms, particularly where attribution, jurisdiction, and proportionality intersect. Attribution is increasingly difficult as attacks are inspired rather than centrally directed, financing flows through informal and illicit channels, and recruitment occurs through encrypted platforms and online ecosystems rather than physical training camps. As a result, military responses alone have proven insufficient and, in some cases, counterproductive. These dynamics complicate the Council's ability to calibrate sanctions, authorise force, or mandate cooperation without escalating geopolitical contestation. UN assessments and development-focused studies demonstrate that heavy-handed security operations can exacerbate civilian harm, erode state legitimacy, and create conditions conducive to further radicalisation. In regions such as the Sahel, UNDP findings indicate that the primary drivers of recruitment into extremist groups are socio-economic grievances, including poverty, marginalisation, and lack of state presence, rather than ideological or religious motivations.

Introduction to the Agenda

For the United Nations Security Council, this agenda strikes at the core of its mandate under the UN Charter to maintain international peace and security. The Council has authorised sanctions regimes, counterterrorism mandates, and enforcement actions under Chapter VII, yet its effectiveness remains constrained by political fragmentation, uneven implementation, and gaps in international cooperation. The transnational nature of extremist networks demands coordinated legal frameworks, intelligence-sharing mechanisms, and financial controls, alongside long-term prevention strategies addressing the structural conditions that enable extremism to flourish. Delegates must therefore assess how the UNSC can balance enforcement with prevention, sovereignty with collective security, and immediate threat mitigation with sustainable peacebuilding.

Suggested Subtopics

- Repatriation and prosecution of captured foreign fighters
- Accountability of states accused of indirectly funding extremists
- State surveillance vs online freedoms in counter-terrorism
- Cross-border military strikes without host-state consent
- Financing terrorist networks through crypto, trade fraud, and informal transfers
- Hybrid extremist threats and attribution challenges
- Emerging threats linked to instability, climate change, and migration

Key Terms

- **Transnational Terrorism:** Terrorist activity that transcends national borders in its organisation, financing, recruitment, or execution. Examples include ISIS-inspired attacks in Europe directed by networks operating from conflict zones in the Middle East or Africa.

- **Extremist Networks:** Decentralised structures comprising affiliates, cells, lone actors, and online communities that share ideology and resources without centralized command. Groups such as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and ISIS-Sahel exemplify this model.

- **Conflict Zones:** Areas experiencing active armed conflict, which disproportionately host terrorist activity due to weakened governance, limited security capacity, and humanitarian crises. The Sahel, parts of the Middle East, and South Asia are current epicentres.

- **Counterterrorism (CT):** Security-focused measures aimed at preventing or responding to terrorist acts, including military operations, intelligence-sharing, sanctions, and law enforcement actions.

- **Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE):** Non-military strategies addressing the root causes of radicalisation, such as socio-economic exclusion, governance failure, and community grievances, often implemented by UN agencies and civil society partners.

- **Sanctions Regimes:** UNSC-mandated measures such as asset freezes, travel bans, and arms embargoes targeting individuals and entities associated with terrorism, including those listed under the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaeda sanctions framework.

- **Chapter VII of the UN Charter:** The legal basis allowing the UNSC to authorise binding measures (including sanctions and the use of force) when threats to international peace and security are identified.

Key Issues

- **Conflict–Terrorism Nexus and Shifting Epicentres**
  - Transnational terrorism is increasingly inseparable from armed conflict. The concentration of attacks in conflict zones highlights how instability, governance failure, and prolonged violence create permissive environments for extremist networks.
  - Over the past decade, the epicentre of extremist lethality has shifted notably toward the Sahel region of sub-Saharan Africa, reflecting the spillover effects of weak borders, underdeveloped institutions, and regional insecurity.

- **Decentralisation and Attribution Challenges**
  - The decentralisation of extremist networks complicates attribution and reduces the effectiveness of conventional military responses. Attacks are often conducted by loosely affiliated actors rather than centrally directed operatives, making it difficult to determine responsibility or justify collective enforcement measures.
  - For the UNSC, this creates legal and operational uncertainty when authorising sanctions, cross-border actions, or Chapter VII measures.

- **Hybrid Financing and Recruitment Mechanisms**
  - Extremist groups increasingly rely on multi-vector supply chains to avoid network dismantlement. Financing exploits legal and financial loopholes such as diaspora remittances, trade fraud, cryptocurrencies, and informal value transfer systems. Recruitment is facilitated through encrypted platforms and social-media ecosystems, allowing groups to bypass physical borders entirely.
  - As a result, military strikes and local policing alone are insufficient, and effective responses must combine financial disruption, intelligence-led law enforcement, counter-messaging, and community-level interventions.

Key Issues

- **Risks of Over-Militarisation**
  - Responses that rely primarily on force carry significant secondary risks. Heavy-handed military campaigns can cause civilian harm, erode state legitimacy, and create recruitment incentives. UN analysis shows that socio-economic factors such as poverty, marginalisation, and governance failure are increasingly exploited by extremist recruiters.
  - In sub-Saharan Africa, UNDP findings indicate that up to 92% of new recruits join extremist groups for economic or livelihood-related reasons rather than ideological or religious motivations, demonstrating the limits of purely kinetic strategies.

- **Operational Constraints within the UNSC**
  - The UNSC faces persistent practical impediments, including political divisions among permanent members, difficulty distinguishing state-supported versus privately coordinated attacks, and the absence of a unified global system to monitor small, non-state terrorist networks. These challenges hinder timely and decisive collective action.

- **Need for Integrated and Preventive UNSC Action**
  - To address these operational gaps, the UNSC must adopt a multifaceted strategy combining targeted security operations with long-term prevention measures such as development, judicial reform, and reintegration programmes. Strengthened sanctions and financial measures, interoperable legal frameworks, and coordinated political, security, and development efforts are essential.
  - Opportunities for enhanced action include joint UN-regional P/CVE task forces, expanded cross-border investigative tools, scaled-up community resilience and deradicalisation programmes, and pairing enforcement with diplomatic conflict-resolution to close safe havens. Given the digital nature of modern extremist recruitment, international norms on online extremist content, crisis-time cooperation with private platforms, and cyber-investigative capacity-building are increasingly critical, alongside clear exit criteria and civilian protections for any Chapter VII measures.

Major Parties

Transnational Extremist Organisations (ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and Affiliates)

a. Key non-state actors include ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and their affiliated groups such as AQIM, AQAP, Al-Shabaab, and IS-Sahel. These organisations have evolved from hierarchical, territory-based entities into decentralised networks made up of local affiliates, lone actors, online incubators, and cross-border support structures, constituting the primary security threat under consideration by the Council.

b. They operate across the Sahel, Horn of Africa, Middle East, and South Asia, exploiting ungoverned spaces and weak state institutions. While often locally embedded, affiliates of established groups remain capable of inspiring or coordinating attacks globally, giving their operational reach a transnational rather than purely regional character.

Regional Frontline States (Sahel, Middle East, South Asia)

a. Countries such as Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Somalia, Nigeria, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are central battlegrounds where extremist networks thrive. These states experience persistent conflict, porous borders, and limited governance capacity, allowing terrorist groups to embed themselves within local grievances and conflict economies.

b. As shown by the Global Terrorism Index, over 90% of terrorist attacks and 98% of terrorism deaths in 2023 occurred within active conflict zones, underscoring how terrorism is increasingly concentrated in fragile and war-affected states rather than stable regions.

c. Their capacity gaps, governance challenges, and reliance on external security assistance create leverage for both UNSC members and regional powers seeking influence.

Major Parties

Permanent Members of the UNSC (P5: USA, UK, France, Russia, China)

a. The United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China play a decisive role in shaping the global counterterrorism framework through their permanent status on the UNSC, veto power, and control over sanctions regimes, mandates, and authorisations under Chapter VII. Their intelligence capabilities, military reach, and financial leverage mean that the effectiveness of international counterterrorism efforts is largely contingent on P5 coordination. Additionally, while all five publicly condemn terrorism, divergence arises over attribution, intervention thresholds, and the political consequences of enforcement.

b. The United States remains the most active global counterterrorism actor, leading intelligence-sharing networks and conducting drone strikes, special operations, and sanctions designations. While Washington frames its strategy around pre-emptive disruption of terrorist networks, unilateral or coalition-based operations have at times generated UNSC tensions, particularly regarding civilian harm and sovereignty.

c. The United Kingdom and France broadly align with US approaches but place greater emphasis on multilateral coordination, legal frameworks, and regional capacity-building. France has been especially engaged in counterterrorism operations in the Sahel, while the UK has focused on intelligence cooperation and sanctions enforcement through UN mechanisms.

d. By contrast, Russia and China adopt more state-centric interpretations of counterterrorism, prioritising sovereignty, and regime stability. Russia has justified its military involvement in Syria as counterterrorism, though critics argue its definition of extremism is often expanded to include political opposition. China links terrorism to separatism and instability, emphasising domestic security and development while resisting UNSC actions perceived as legitimising external intervention.

e. Persistent political fragmentation among the P5 limits unified enforcement against terrorist networks, particularly in geopolitically sensitive regions. Divergent threat perceptions and proxy conflicts frequently dilute resolutions or result in selective implementation, weakening UNSC coherence and enabling extremist networks to exploit legal ambiguity and political paralysis.

United Nations Counterterrorism Bodies and Regional Partners

a. UN entities such as the UN Counter-Terrorism Office (UNOCT) and UNODC work alongside regional organisations to expand coordination mechanisms, capacity-building programmes, and legal frameworks for counterterrorism. These bodies support intelligence-led law enforcement, sanctions implementation, and judicial cooperation.

b. Their effectiveness is directly linked to the clarity, enforceability, and political backing of UNSC mandates, rather than independent authority.

c. However, gaps remain in real-time intelligence sharing, cross-border legal cooperation, and consistent enforcement of sanctions lists, limiting their overall effectiveness.

HISTORY AND TIMELINE

2001 – The 9/11 Attacks and Global Counter-Terrorism Shift: The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, in the United States marked a turning point in global security. These coordinated attacks revealed the capacity of transnational terrorist networks, specifically al-Qaeda, to reach across borders. The UNSC swiftly adopted Resolution 1373, obligating states to criminalize terrorist financing, improve intelligence sharing, and strengthen border control. This established the foundation of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), ushering in a new era of multilateral cooperation against terrorism.

2011 – The Arab Spring and Regional Destabilization: A wave of uprisings spread across the Middle East and North Africa, starting in Tunisia and rapidly affecting Libya, Egypt, and Syria. While initially rooted in popular calls for democracy, the political vacuum in several states fostered extremist movements and renewed regional instability. International actors increased counter-radicalization efforts and humanitarian aid. However, fragmented governance and armed militias complicated peacekeeping and counter-terrorism missions. This weakening of state institutions created fertile ground for transnational groups to expand operations.

HISTORY AND TIMELINE

2014 – The Rise of ISIS in Syria and Iraq: The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) declared a caliphate, exploiting power vacuums created by the Syrian civil war and instability in Iraq, ISIS combined military, propaganda, and financial strategies, recruiting thousands of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) worldwide, in retaliation, the UNSC adopted Resolution 2178, compelling states to criminalize travel for terrorism purposes, improve border screening, and enhance information exchange. Global coalitions (like the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS) formed, highlighting unprecedented international coordination, though territorial losses of ISIS did not end its ideology.

2020s – Digital Extremism and the Growth of Online Networks

- Extremist groups increasingly turned to the internet and social media to radicalize, recruit, and fund operations, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic's digital acceleration. The threat has managed to decentralize itself, now being driven by online radicalization and ideological lone actors rather than hierarchical organizations. The UNSC passed Resolution 2396, encouraging the use of biometric screening, Passenger Name Record (PNR) data collection, and the use of advanced technologies to track terrorist movements. These measures marked progress in adapting counter-terrorism frameworks to the digital era, though enforcement and compliance still lag among states due to capability gaps and privacy concerns.
- International cooperation has deepened through standardized laws, intelligence-sharing mechanisms, and joint operations. The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) now centralizes global coordination. But even now, uneven enforcement and technical capacity among member states, political divisions that slow multilateral decision-making and evolving threats that outpace legal and technological responses still hold us back when it comes to this issue.

Questions a Resolution Must Answer:

- How can the UNSC ensure that counterterrorism operations are coordinated effectively across borders while respecting the sovereignty of member states?
- Which socio-economic, political, and governance interventions should be prioritised in regions vulnerable to recruitment, and how can the UNSC monitor their effectiveness?
- How can short-term security measures (e.g., military operations, targeted strikes) be balanced with long-term prevention strategies such as deradicalisation, community resilience, and socio-economic development?
- What safeguards and exit criteria should be applied when authorising Chapter VII measures to ensure civilian protection and prevent destabilisation?
- How can the UNSC address the growing digital dimension of terrorism, including recruitment, propaganda, and operational coordination on social media and encrypted platforms?
- How can international partnerships, including cooperation with regional organisations and private technology companies, be leveraged to prevent and respond to transnational terrorism?
- What strategies can be implemented to identify and counter hybrid threats from non-state actors, local affiliates, and opportunistic militias while distinguishing them from ideologically motivated extremist groups?

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Agenda 2: Assessing the Geopolitical and Security Implications of Foreign Military Bases in Conflict-Affected Regions

Introduction to the Agenda

In a 2020 study funded by the U.S Department of Defense, the authors claimed that U.S. military presence in a country is associated with positive sentiment toward the United States among citizens of the hosting country. Specifically, they argue that interpersonal contact with U.S. military personnel and their dependents, as well as economic benefits arising from U.S. presence, generate favourable attitudes toward the U.S. government, American people, and the U.S. military forces. Within the Security Council, such findings are not merely academic; they are routinely invoked by permanent members to legitimise overseas military bases as stabilising and cooperating security arrangements rather than instruments of power projection.

This guide and its resultant findings are in itself a case study in how countries, particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, frame foreign military deployments as benevolent security partnerships, even when such deployments materially alter local power balanced and regional security dynamics.

A foreign military base can be defined generally as an extraterritorial unit established on the territory of a host state, granting an external actor sovereign or semi-sovereign rights. Used interchangeably with terms such as “foreign security bases,” “overseas security bases,” “foreign security arrangements,” “foreign security installations,” or “foreign military posts,” these terms vary slightly in meaning. For the purposes of UNSC deliberation, however, they collectively represent fixed instruments of external military leverage that operate beyond full host-state jurisdiction and often outside effective international oversight. It is this legal and political ambiguity that repeatedly limits UNSC action and creates space for veto-protected military entrenchment.

The first issue this agenda brings to light is the legality and political sustainability of military missions abroad. In order to understand the harm of foreign military operations by ex-colonial nations, delegates must look beyond the diplomatic assurances and immediate security relief that these missions offer and into the heart of global resource extraction and management. They must instead examine why instability necessitating foreign basing emerged in the first place, who benefits from its persistence, and what constraints prevent its resolution.

What caused the particular instability issue in the first place that prompted countries to seek military support? Who are the groups involved, and what financial, political, or logistical networks sustain them? And where instability is not the stated justification, is the base positioned for strategic leverage, such as near maritime chokepoints, resource corridors, or intelligence-sensitive regions?

Introduction to the Agenda

When these questions are examined collectively, a pattern emerges: regions hosting dense concentrations of foreign bases remain among the most politically fragmented, economically constrained, and militarily volatile. A critical example remains the African continent, which houses the greatest number of foreign bases, and consequently facing devastating socio-economical burdens.

While rarely stated explicitly, several Western powers benefit from prolonged instability. By keeping host states reliant on foreign aid, they can leverage it as payment for the right to establish military bases across continents and control mineral resources. Combined with internal violence, weak institutions, and elite capture, this dynamic often leaves governments unable to challenge inequitable agreements or regulate external military activity monopolising on resources.

This race to establish bases as a form of dominance, intertwined with resource access, deep financial entanglements with rebel groups, and security conditionality, is evident in a lot of the military strategies of several global and regional powers, including the United States, China, Russia, and Saudi Arabia. However, the UNSC must also acknowledge that not all basing arrangements are uniform in intent or impact, complicating collective regulatory action.

It is these realities that representatives of the Security Council must confront. Foreign military bases sit at the intersection of security provision, sovereignty erosion, and great power competition. They unintentionally provide a clear lens through which the Council can evaluate where regulation is possible, where enforcement is constrained by veto politics, and where compromise becomes the price of collective action. If addressed effectively, the findings this committee produces could be a hallmark to breaking the shackles of superpower rivalry and resolving regional instability.

Suggested Subtopics

- Balancing Security Cooperation with National Sovereignty
- Economic Dependencies vs Equitable Development
- Great Power Competition and Regional Security Dilemmas
- Militarization of Conflict Zones
- Human Security and Social Impact of Foreign Bases
- Strategic Autonomy vs. External Security Guarantees
- Geostrategic Location and Resource Competition

Key Terms

Foreign Military Bases: Installations established by one country on another's soil to project power, support operations (e.g., counterterrorism, maritime security), or secure strategic interests. Examples include U.S. bases in Germany, China's base in Djibouti, and Russia's facility in Syria, often governed by bilateral agreements.

Sovereignty Erosion: The diminution of a host nation's autonomous control due to foreign military presence, potentially violating international norms like UN Charter Article 2(4). This is evident in debates over U.S. bases in Okinawa or Russian influence in Ukraine.

Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs): Legal pacts defining the rights and responsibilities of foreign troops in host countries, often criticized for lack of transparency. Examples include U.S.–Japan SOFAs or China's agreements in Africa, which can shape local governance and resource access.

Hegemonic Competition: Rivalry among global powers (e.g., U.S., China, Russia) to establish military footholds, influencing regional stability. This is seen in the Indo-Pacific with U.S. and Chinese bases or Russia's Arctic militarization challenging NATO.

Security Dilemma: A scenario where military bases intended to deter aggression (e.g., U.S. bases in South Korea) provoke counteractions, such as arms races or local unrest, escalating tensions rather than ensuring peace.

Resource Competition: The strategic placement of bases to secure access to critical resources (e.g., oil, rare earths), as seen with China's bases near African mining regions or U.S. presence near Middle Eastern oil fields.
Host Nation Consent: The legal and political agreement by a country to host foreign bases, often tied to economic incentives or security guarantees, but subject to public or governmental backlash (e.g., Philippines' debates over U.S. bases).

Key Issues

Lack of privacy protection and regulation: AI and advanced surveillance technologies are examples of swiftly evolving technologies; however, numerous countries lack proper limitations and laws governing the usage of these systems. Governments and companies can monitor individuals and access their personal data and information, as well as use AI systems without limitations, if there are inadequate restrictions placed upon their operation. The individual right to control their own information is weakened in many sectors where there are wide information breaches that take place without their consent and awareness through cameras and phones, so people cannot easily defend their rights and fight for greater safeguards regarding the issue.

Lack of public education: The lack of education regarding AI and surveillance systems could lead both the population and government to lack a clear understanding of how these AI technologies harvest, process, and use personal data. This means that people aren't aware of their own digital rights and human rights regarding technology usage, and how to act when data is leaked or breached to untrusted people and sources, and the hacking of their own personal devices.

Bias and discrimination using AI: The use of AI may produce misleading outcomes when it's trained using prejudiced or insufficient information. Facial recognition tools and predictive policing tools are clear examples of this issue, where people from minorities, refugees, and vulnerable communities are frequently misidentified, and could escalate leading to the wrong arrest of innocent people and the denial of necessary and basic rights.

Key Issues

- *Sovereignty vs. Security*
  - The presence of foreign military bases raises fundamental questions of sovereignty, particularly where extraterritorial privileges are granted to foreign forces. While governments may welcome bases for protection against external threats or internal instability, many domestic groups view them as infringements on independence.
  - This tension creates political divides within host states and fuels wider debates about whether security justifies a loss of autonomy. In the case of Okinawa, a small prefecture constituting only 0.6% of Japan's surface land but hosting 70% of US military facilities within Japan, the Okinawa government acknowledges the wider US–Japan strategic role but considers the US military presence as an obstacle to, instead of a driver of, their economic development.

- *Militarization of Conflict Zones*
  - Bases established in unstable or war-torn regions can deepen militarization, as foreign powers become active participants in local conflicts. Instead of stabilizing, bases can attract attacks, provoke rival powers, or entrench divisions within host societies. This often turns conflict zones into geopolitical chessboards, where bases act as both strategic assets and flashpoints for further violence.
  - In Sudan, a country located strategically at the junction of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, superpowers have raced to establish military bases. While Russia has claimed its facility is aimed at maintaining peace and stability in the region, the country accounted for about 87% of Sudan's armament, and has previously vetoed a resolution calling for a ceasefire in Sudan for humanitarian reasons.
  - In such contexts, military installations function simultaneously as security instruments and escalation nodes, shaping the trajectory of conflicts under Council scrutiny.

Key Issues

- *Deterrent of Long-Term Stability*
  - Supporters of foreign bases argue they are critical for combating terrorism, protecting shipping routes, and providing rapid humanitarian response. Bases allow quicker deployment of troops and aircraft, making them valuable in regions prone to crises.
  - However, their strategic utility is often prioritised over long-term political solutions, creating security architectures that manage crises rather than resolve them.

- *Great Power Competition*
  - The growing presence of US, Russian, and Chinese bases abroad reflects an intensifying strategic rivalry. Military presence is used not only to project force but to influence regional alignments and secure economic and political interests.
  - Host states are often caught between competing offers of aid, security, or economic benefits, turning their territory into arenas for great power competition that risks destabilizing fragile regions.
  - Cuba is a perfect example of a nation caught in the crossfire as a result of its strategic location to the USA, making it an ideal vantage point for intelligence operations.
  - While rumours and inconclusive evidence of such Russian and Chinese operations abound, Cuba must make sacrifices between the temporary aid and/or beneficial partnerships that these superpowers offer and the continued U.S. trade embargo since 1960 that has crippled the island nation's economy. Throughout all of this, its citizens are the ones who suffer brutal separation from families, attempted U.S. invasions, forced migrations into Guantanamo Bay, and so on.

Key Issues

- *Economic, Social, and Political Impact on Host States*
  - Foreign bases can stimulate local economies through jobs, infrastructure projects, and financial aid, incentivising governments to host them. However, benefits are often unevenly distributed and can foster dependency.
  - Public protest bases, whether over sovereignty, misconduct by foreign troops, or environmental concerns, reveal the deep political and social tensions they generate within host states.
  - This is visible in the case of Djibouti, a small nation along the Horn of Africa that has the highest GDP per capita in the region as a result of being the only nation in the world with at least eight foreign military bases coming from countries like the United States, China, Japan, France, Italy, etc. While this "small-state diplomacy" is lucrative, the majority of the population live to see none of it. Almost half the population is unemployed, one fifth in extreme poverty, with the president and his relatives cashing in on, and therefore allowing the continued international military presence.

Major Parties

United States of America (USA)

a. The USA maintains the world's largest network of overseas military bases, with hundreds spread across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. These bases are justified by Washington as vital for counterterrorism, deterrence against rival powers, and rapid crisis response.
b. Within the UNSC, the scale and permanence of U.S. basing give Washington disproportionate influence over how foreign military presence is framed within international security discourse, including within the Security Council itself.
c. However, these bases are often criticized for infringing on national sovereignty, fuelling instability, or provoking anti-American sentiment in host states.
d. Such criticisms rarely translate into binding outcomes without alignment among other permanent members, making U.S. consent central to any Council-driven action.

Russian Federation

a. Russia operates a smaller but strategically significant network of foreign military facilities, concentrated in the former Soviet sphere (e.g., Armenia, Belarus, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan), and in key conflict zones such as Syria (Tartus naval base, Khmeimim air base).
b. Moscow portrays these bases as necessary to protect Russian interests and allies, but critics argue they cement Russian influence and militarize fragile regions.
c. In Security Council dynamics, Russian bases serve as both operational assets and as political leverage, enabling Moscow to block or dilute resolutions that may legitimise international security.
d. While Russia frequently frames itself as resisting Western military expansion, it maintains its own stronghold bases abroad, highlighting how basing debates in the UNSC are shaped by strategic parity rather than legal consistency.

People's Republic of China

a. China is a rising yet increasingly influential actor in overseas basing. Its first official overseas base was established in Djibouti (2017), for anti-piracy operations, but Beijing has since sought access to additional ports and facilities across the Indian Ocean, Africa, and potentially the Pacific.
b. China's growing global military footprint is viewed by some as "strategic encirclement," raising concerns about whether it will replicate the destabilizing effects attributed to Western bases, as well as raising questions about future UNSC regulatory capacity.

Major Parties

United Kingdom & France

a. As two permanent UNSC members with a colonial legacy, the UK and France still maintain overseas bases and troop deployments in strategic regions. The UK has bases in Cyprus, the Falklands, and the Middle East, while France has a strong military presence in Africa (Djibouti, Sahel region, Côte d'Ivoire, etc.).

b. Both countries justify their presence as part of counterterrorism and peacekeeping but often generate accusations of neo-colonial influence that complicate UNSC consensus-building and draw conflict into fragile regions.

c. Their dual status as norm-setters and active military actors reinforces a structural reality of the Council: standards applied to non-permanent or host states are rarely imposed on permanent members themselves.

Middle Eastern Host States (Qatar, Bahrain, Iraq, Syria, etc.)

a. Several conflict-prone Middle Eastern states host foreign military bases. Qatar (home to Al Udeid Air Base) and Bahrain (hosting the US Fifth Fleet) are key hubs for US operations. Iraq has long hosted US and coalition forces, while Syria has become a contested zone with both US and Russian bases operating during and after the civil war. These bases often act as flashpoints, attracting attacks and inflaming internal political divisions, making host states pivotal to the debate.

b. While formally sovereign, these states typically possess limited bargaining power once basing arrangements are established, with decisions about expansion, duration, or withdrawal shaped largely by external actors.

c. As a result, host states are frequently subjects of Security Council deliberation rather than decisive participants in shaping outcomes.

African Host States (Djibouti, Niger, Libya, etc.)

a. Djibouti is unique as the only country hosting multiple foreign bases (US, China, France, Italy, Japan), making it a microcosm of the global basing debate. Niger has become a central hub for US and French counterterrorism operations, though these bases have recently come under domestic backlash. Libya, though not formally hosting bases, has seen extensive foreign military presence through proxy conflicts, showing how bases can exacerbate instability in fragile African states.

Major Parties

Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs)

a. Private military and security companies operate alongside foreign military bases, providing logistics, training, base security, and combat support. Unlike state militaries, PMSCs operate under fragmented legal frameworks and are often shielded by contractual arrangements rather than international humanitarian law, enabling plausible deniability.

b. The Wagner group, a Russian-linked paramilitary organisation active in Syria, Libya, Sudan, Mali, and the Central African Republic, exemplifies this dynamic. Wagner forces have been linked to human rights abuses and resource exploitation while advancing Russian strategic interests without formal state attribution. Despite organisational changes since 2023, this model persists through successor entities, continuing to blur lines between state and non-state military power and limiting the Council's ability to impose consequences.

Armed Militias and Proxy Forces

a. Militias and proxy groups frequently operate near foreign bases as partners, adversaries, or instruments of indirect influence. These actors often receive external funding or training while remaining formally autonomous, enabling escalation without direct state confrontation.

b. Iran-aligned groups such as 'Kata'ib Hezbollah' in Iraq and the 'Houthis' in Yemen have repeatedly targeted foreign military installations, exploiting attribution gaps and UNSC divisions. Similar dynamics in Libya and Sudan show how militia use foreign support to entrench power, undermining ceasefires endorsed by the Council.

History and Timeline

Foreign military bases in conflict-affected regions shape local power balances, regional alliances, and the risk of escalation, while also offering security guarantees, logistics, and training that can stabilize fragile states. The implications are therefore mixed: they can deter threats and support peace operations, but they can also deepen dependency, provoke rival powers, and trigger domestic backlash.

Early 2000s – Post–Cold War Expansion

- In the early 2000s, a lot of major powers either expanded or consolidated bases in Central Asia and the Middle East to support operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, using facilities in states like Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Gulf countries as logistics and strike hubs.
- These deployments were justified as necessary for counterterrorism and regional stability, but neighbouring states such as Russia, China, and Iran had very justifiably perceived them as encirclement and pushed for limits or withdrawals, making foreign basing into a broader great-power competition.

2010s – Conflict Zones and Regional Ambitions

- From the 2010s, conflict-affected areas in the Horn of Africa, the Red Sea, and parts of the Middle East saw a growing density of foreign bases, including U.S., European, Gulf, and other facilities used for anti-piracy, counterterrorism, and intervention in civil wars. Countries like the United Arab Emirates developed networks of bases in Yemen, Somalia, and Eritrea to project power, secure maritime chokepoints, and influence local conflicts, demonstrating how bases became tools of regional rather than purely global powers.

2020s – Sovereignty Debates and Legal-Security Friction

- By the 2020s, regional organizations and national publics increasingly questioned the sovereignty and security costs of hosting foreign forces, with bodies such as the African Union's Peace and Security Council warning that foreign bases complicate arms monitoring and may fuel militarization.
- At the same time, some governments explore new basing agreements to confront transnational crime or insurgency, prompting constitutional and legal debates, such as in Latin American states considering overturning bans on foreign bases to reconcile security cooperation with non-intervention norms.

Questions a Resolution Must Answer:

1. How can countries host foreign outposts in a manner that is not military-oriented?
2. How can the focus be redirected to true economic development and regional diplomacy?
3. What reforms may the UNSC uplift or mandate to ensure host-state self-sufficiency during and before foreign military withdrawal?
4. What military and non-military alternatives can the UNSC realistically support to reduce on foreign bases?
5. What agreements can be put in place to encourage accountability? What all aspects would such an agreement specify?
6. How can the UNSC ensure accountability for crimes or damages caused by military personnel or bases in foreign regions?
7. What protective measures can be put in place to lower disruption to local communities?
8. How can host countries prevent and be compensated for the massive environmental damage because of these bases?
9. What past legal and financial burdens borne by host states should inform UNSC guidelines on basing agreements?
10. How can humanitarian international law, including protections of the environment, be integrated into UNSC mandates on bases in foreign regions?
11. What measures can shift environmental, social, and financial burdens from host states to visiting military powers?
12. What measures can be put in place to reverse and henceforth prevent the historically detrimental impact to affected communities?

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