

# HALMUN



## UNSC BACKGROUND GUIDE

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## Letter From the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Haileybury Almaty model United Nations 2022! We are honored to welcome you to the UNSC committee.

The topic this for the UNSC is:

### *Resolving the Persian Gulf Crisis*

The Security Council, the major crisis-management body of the UN, has the authority to impose legally enforceable requirements on the 193 UN member nations in order to preserve peace. The council's five permanent members and its ten elected members hold regular meetings to discuss dangers to global security, such as terrorism, civil wars, and natural disasters. The Security Council has a variety of alternatives at its disposal and acts to crises across the world on a case-by-case basis.

In 1991, in retaliation for Iraq's illegal annexation of Kuwait, a coalition of 35 nations led by the United States launched the Gulf War. Kuwait's unwillingness to lower its oil production was seen by Iraq as an attack on the Iraqi economy. International criticism of the invasion of Kuwait led to the immediate imposition of financial sanctions against Iraq by the United Nations Security Council. The United States president George H.W. Bush and British prime minister Margaret Thatcher sent soldiers and supplies to Saudi Arabia and pushed other nations to do the same. The coalition led by the United States attracted a wide range of nations in response to the request, creating the biggest military alliance since World War II.

This Background Guide is an introduction of the agenda to the committee, we strongly encourage all delegates to do further independent research, therefore having a better understanding of the topic. We want to be clear that any incidences of discrimination based on race, country ethnicity, age, gender identity will not be tolerated in order to ensure that this MUN conference is enjoyable for everyone.

If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact our executive committee:

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We wish you all the best and look forward to seeing your performance in the Conference!

## Committee Overview

### Introduction

The Permanent 5—China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States—are the Security Council's five permanent members. A resolution can be vetoed by any of them. The 10 elected members of the council, who are given two-year, staggered mandates, do not have veto authority. The United States and Soviet Union were the war's two clear winners, and they, together with the United Kingdom, helped to create the post political structure. The Permanent 5 have preferential status that dates back to the United Nations' establishment in the years following World War II.<sup>1</sup> To varied degrees, the Permanent 5 members have used their veto power. Russia has exercised its veto the most frequently, opposing more than one hundred resolutions since the council's creation, if one counts the period when the Soviet Union maintained its membership.

A resolution that advocated for the prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration of people involved in terrorism-related activities was rejected by the United States in 2020, the second-to-last time it used its veto. The nation took issue with the resolution's omission of a request for the return of combatants from the self-declared Islamic State and their families. China has been using its veto more frequently lately. France and the United Kingdom, in comparison, have not used their veto authority since 1989 and have urged the other P5 members to do so as well.

The ten non - permanent council members, who are chosen by a two-thirds majority of the UN General Assembly, have some impact over determining the council's agenda because the president of the body varies on a monthly basis. The main qualification requirement is "contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security," which is frequently interpreted as providing resources or personnel for peacekeeping missions or exercising leadership on issues of regional security that are likely to come before the council.

Any state may alert the Security Council to an issue to which it is a party, even if that state is not a UN member. The committee first looks into the possibilities of a peaceful resolution when a claim is made. Opposition forces may be ordered to remain apart while further negotiations take place with the help of worldwide peacekeeping forces. The assembly may request that UN members impose political or financial penalties if it determines that there is a genuine threat to peace, a violation of peace, or an act of aggression. The UN Charter authorizes the Security Council to use military force against the offending country if these diplomatic measures are ineffective.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Security council, "United Nations Security Council", *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/>

## Accomplishment of UNSC

Over the course of more than 70-year history, UNSC have accumulated an amazing list of peacekeeping accomplishments, including receiving the Nobel Peace Prize.<sup>2</sup>

Since 1948, the UN has carried out effective peacekeeping missions in multiple nations, including Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mozambique, Namibia, and Tajikistan, assisting in the resolution of conflicts and promoting reunification.

In other locations where UN peacekeeping operations have just ended or are still ongoing, such as Sierra Leone, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Timor-Leste, Liberia, Haiti, and Kosovo, UN peacekeeping has also had a significant impact. These UN actions have aided democratic transformations and assisted in supporting flimsy new national institutions by offering fundamental assurances and responding to crises. Even while there are still significant obstacles to achieving lasting peace, they have assisted nations in ending the chapter of violence and opening a road to normal growth.

## Topic Overview

### Introduction

In retaliation for Iraq's illegal annexation of Kuwait, an alliance of 35 nations led by the United States launched the Gulf War<sup>3</sup>. On January 17, 1991, an airborne and marine attack started the first fight to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. This bombardment lasted for five weeks. During this time, Iraq started firing projectiles into Israel in an effort to elicit a military reaction from Israel, which the Iraqi authorities hoped would force the coalition's Muslim governments to disband and endanger the coalition against Iraq. Iraq deployed Scud missiles at alliance sites located in Saudi Arabia after its missile assault against Israel failed to elicit the anticipated response.

The alliance then launched a ground invasion into Kuwait, which was under Iraqi control, on February 24. Coalition troops won the operation handily, liberating Kuwait and immediately starting their drive over the Iraq-Kuwait boundary into Iraq terrain. 100 hours after the ground war started, the alliance stopped advancing and issued a cease-fire.

Iraq, Kuwait, and the regions bordering Iraq and Saudi Arabia were the only places where airborne and land combat took place.

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<sup>2</sup> Edward Mortimer, "The First 70 Years of the United Nations: Achievements and Challenges", *United Nations*, United Nations, September 2015.

<https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/first-70-years-united-nations-achievements-and-challenges>

<sup>3</sup> The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica "Persian Gulf War" *Britannica*, Britannica.

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Persian-Gulf-War>

After the regular broadcasting of footage from cameras onboard American bombers during Operation Desert Storm, the war also acquired the moniker Video Game War. Live newscasts from front lines of the conflict were first introduced during this conflict, primarily by the American network CNN.

## Background

Iraq recovered from the 1980–1988 Iran–Iraq War with its government unscathed and a heightened sense of patriotism, but it was also burdened with enormous debts.<sup>4</sup> Iraq owed \$37 billion to Gulf lenders in 1990 after borrowing heavily to fund the military effort. Saddam Hussein, the president of Iraq, appealed to the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait to discharge the debt they had against Iraq, saying that the debts should be viewed as compensation for Iraq's defense of the Arabian Peninsula against Iranian territorial expansion, but his requests went ignored. Saddam Hussein's choice to issue threats against Kuwait, Iraq's wealthy but militarily inferior neighbor, was influenced by the Gulf states' reluctance to forgive Iraq's war debts.

The long-standing dispute over ownership of the Warbah and Bubiyan Islands, to which Iraq attributed attention due to the access control they provided to its seaport on the Khawr 'Abd Allah—the shipping lane to the Persian Gulf that stayed the only feasible option available to the closed Shatt Al-'Arab, which was littered with wreckage from the Iran-Iraq War—was reignited after Kuwait turned down Saddam's borrowing requests.

Then-Iraqi Prime Minister General 'Abd Al-Karim Qasim said that Kuwait was an "integral component of Iraq" since it had been previously part of the Ottoman region of Al-Basrah in 1961 when the United Kingdom ceased its sovereignty over Kuwait. Iraq threatened to assert its control over Kuwait, but when British soldiers were sent in response, the Iraqis were obliged to back down. Saddam claimed in July 1990 that Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates had exceeded their Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) quotas and exported too much crude oil, which had caused prices to fall and robbed Iraq of vital oil earnings.<sup>5</sup> Relationships between the United States and Iraq deteriorated during this time. Iraq claimed that by pressuring Kuwait to lower oil prices, the US and Israel were purposefully hurting Iraq. In order to warn Iraq against attacking the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait with armed power, the United States performed maneuvers in the Gulf when it first started to threaten Kuwait early in July 1990.

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<sup>4</sup> Krogh, Peter F. Peter Frederic, "Persian Gulf War Discussion" *Georgetown University. School of Foreign Service*, WHYY-TV (Television station : Philadelphia, PA), 1989.

<https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/handle/10822/552642>

<sup>5</sup> The Editors of *Encyclopedia Britannica* "Persian Gulf War" *Britannica*, Britannica.

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Persian-Gulf-War>

## Current Situation

The Persian Gulf crisis, which lasted from 2019 to 2021, was a situation of continuous, high-level military hostilities in the Persian Gulf between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America, as well as their native allies.<sup>6</sup> In an effort to prevent Iran and its claimed supporters from attacking American personnel and values in the Arab states of the Persian Gulf and Iraq, the U.S. increased its military presence in the area beginning in early May 2019. As a result of the U.S. withdrawing from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the encroachment of new sanctions on Iran, and the classification of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization, democratic dispute between the two nations had risen during the Trump administration.<sup>7</sup> Iran responded by designating the US Central Command as a terrorist group. The crisis raised continued worries about maritime trade because commercial shipping is now faced with greater warlike threats.

When purported Kata'ib Hezbollah paramilitaries, who are a section of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces, attacked an Iraqi base that was housing American forces in late 2019 or early 2020, the problem worsened. The U.S. carried out attacks against Kata'ib Hezbollah's bases in Iraq and Syria in reprisal, killing 25 gunmen. As a result of Kata'ib Hezbollah's attack on the American embassy in Baghdad, the United States sent hundreds of additional troops to the Middle East and declared that it would proactively strike Iran's "proxies" in Iraq.

Days later, after Qasem Soleimani, the head of the IRGC's Quds Force, and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the general of the PMF, were both murdered by a U.S. drone attack, Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei vowed to avenge U.S. soldiers. In reaction to the situation, the United States sent out approximately 4,000 troops, while Israel increased its security protocols. The JCPOA nuclear agreement was terminated by Iran on January 5, 2020, and the Iraqi government adopted a non-binding legislation ordering the removal of all foreign forces from its borders.<sup>8</sup> After just a third instance against cargo ships in which two members of the crew perished, the situation reappeared in July 2021. The MV *Asphalt Princess*, a second tanker, was also apprehended but eventually released.

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<sup>6</sup> Wikipedia, "2019-2021 Persian Gulf Crisis", *Wikipedia*, Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019%E2%80%932021\\_Persian\\_Gulf\\_crisis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019%E2%80%932021_Persian_Gulf_crisis)

<sup>7</sup> Luciano, Zacarra, "Tensions between the US and Iran and the role of the Gulf States.", European Institute of the Mediterranean, European Institute of the Mediterranean, <https://www.iemed.org/publication/tensions-between-the-us-and-iran-and-the-role-of-the-gulf-states/>

<sup>8</sup> "United Nations Security Council, Press release, Concerned about Lasting Conflicts, Terrorism, Sectarian Tensions Plaguing Persian Gulf, Speakers in Security Council Stress Need for Coherent Approach to Collective Security" *United Nations*, United Nations. <https://press.un.org/en/2020/sc14333.doc.htm>



## Key Stakeholders

### United States of America

The country that spearheaded the liberation of Kuwait and led the United Nations Coalition, the US is perhaps the most involved country in the Persian Gulf crisis not hailing from the region of the Persian Gulf. The US contributed around 700,000 troops out of the 956,000 of the 1991 UN coalition.<sup>9</sup> Leading operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm and Desert Sabre, the liberation of Kuwait would not have been possible without the involvement of the US.<sup>10</sup> Due to political and economic ties with much of the Persian Gulf region, primarily tied to oil, the US has always been involved in the region's politics and events. More recently the US had been involved in an ongoing state of heightening military tensions between Iran and the US in the region.

### Islamic Republic of Iran

Iran is considered to be the most important regional power in the Persian Gulf region, it boasts the largest military and navy in the region and is amongst the most economically active countries in the region along with Saudi Arabia. Iran has recently been involved in a heightened state of military tensions in the region between itself and the US.<sup>11</sup>

### Australia

Under Operation Damask, Australia provided a Naval Task Group to the multilateral force operating in the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman. Additionally, once military actions ended, a navy clearances underwater team helped de-mine Kuwait's port infrastructure while medical personnel were sent onboard a US warship. In the first few weeks of the Desert Storm Campaign, Australian forces encountered a number of occurrences, including the identification of important air dangers from Iraq as a section of Battle Force Zulu's outer periphery, the detection of free-floating mines, and additional help to the airplane USS Midway. Due to the likelihood of sea mines, the Australian Task Force had also been put in grave danger; HMAS Brisbane nearly missed a mine. Following Kuwait's incursion, the economic sanctions on Iraq were heavily enforced by the Australians. As part of Operation Provide Comfort after the war, Australia sent a healthcare force on Operation Habitat to northern Iraq.<sup>12</sup>

### Canada

One of the first nations to renounce Iraq's attack on Kuwait was Canada, which also soon decided to ally with the US-led alliance. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney ordered the Canadian Forces to send out a Naval Task Group in August 1990. As part of Operation Friction, the cruisers HMCS Terra Nova and HMCS

<sup>9</sup> Wikipedia, "Gulf War", *Wikipedia*, Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_War)

<sup>10</sup> The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica "Persian Gulf War" *Britannica*, Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Persian-Gulf-War>

<sup>11</sup> Kayhan Barzegar, "The Balance of Power in the Persian Gulf: An Iranian View", *Belfer Center*, Harvard Kennedy School, Fall 2010

<https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/balance-power-persian-gulf-iranian-view>

<sup>12</sup> Wikipedia, "Gulf War", *Wikipedia*, Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_War)



Athabaskan engaged the marine interdict team that was supplied by the cargo vessel HMCS Protecteur. In the Persian Gulf, the coalition's naval logistical assets were commanded by the Canadian Task Group.

The very first coalition ship to reach Kuwait was HMCS Huron, which arrived in theater after fighting had ended. The Canadian Forces dispatched a CF-18 Hornet and CH-124 Sea King squadron with assistants, as well as a medical center, to cope with fatalities from the ground warfare after the UN authorized the use of action against Iraq. The CF-18s were incorporated into the alliance force when the air war started, and they were entrusted with supplying arms and bombing ground targets. The Canadian military had not been involved in direct combat missions since the Korean War. A CF-18 Hornet that took part in the opening stages of the Battle of Bubiyan against the Iraqi Navy was the only one to officially claim a win during the fight.

## **France**

France sent the second-largest European contribution with 18,000 troops. The French Army unit, which included members of the French Foreign Legion, was the Division Daguet, and it operated on the left flank of the US XVIII Airborne Corps. At first, the French carried out independent operations under French command and control while maintaining close communication with the Americans (via CENTCOM) and Saudis. The XVIII Airborne Corps was given operational command of the Division in January. A number of combat aircraft and naval units were also sent by France. Opération Daguet is what the French dubbed their effort.

## **United Kingdom**

Of all the European nations that took part in the combat actions of the war, the United Kingdom committed the greatest contingent. The cover name for the actions in the Persian Gulf war Operation Granby. The Persian Gulf saw the mobilization of British Army regiments (primarily with the 1st Armored Division), Royal Air Force, Naval Air Squadrons, and Royal Navy ships. From airfields in Saudi Arabia and different ships in the Persian Gulf, the Royal Air Force and Naval Air Squadrons both deployed a variety of aircraft. During the Battle of Norfolk, the UK played a significant part in the destruction of almost 200 Iraqi tanks and numerous other vehicles.

## The prior involvement of the UN

After the Iraqi military had invaded Kuwait on August 2nd 1990, the United Nations condemned the invasion and demanded immediate withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait.<sup>13</sup> On August 6th 1990 the United Nations security council passed resolution 661 imposing sanctions on Iraq, banning all trade with Iraq.<sup>14</sup> On November 29th 1990 the United Nations Security Council declared that if the Iraqi forces did not withdraw from Kuwait by January 15th 1991 the United Nations would use any means necessary to force the withdrawal. On January 16th 1991, as the UN deadline passed, the Security Council assembled a coalition of armed forces of 35 countries led by the United States of America to force the withdrawal of the Iraqi military from Kuwait. The coalition included the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, Saudi Arabia, Egypt among many others. By the 28th of February 1991 the United Nations coalition had freed Kuwait city from the Iraqi occupation and liberated Kuwait.

### Questions to be Considered

- Why has there been a heightening in tensions between the US and Iran in the region? How does this affect the stability of the region?
- What are methods of deescalation that could be used in the crisis?
- Should military presence be decreased or increased in the region?
- Why is the Persian Gulf so important to the global balance of power and global trade?
- What were the consequences of the first Persian Gulf War? What impacts did it have on the region?
- How should the United Nations Security Council approach and help resolve the growing tensions in the Persian Gulf? What actions should be taken to stabilize the region?

<sup>13</sup> History (Youtube), "What happened in the Persian Gulf War?", *History*, History (Youtube), 15 September 2017. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1\\_lctDXHuQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1_lctDXHuQ)

<sup>14</sup> The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica "Persian Gulf War" *Britannica*, Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Persian-Gulf-War>

## Suggested reading

<https://press.un.org/en/2020/sc14333.doc.htm>

“United Nations Security Council, Press release, Concerned about Lasting Conflicts, Terrorism, Sectarian Tensions Plaguing Persian Gulf, Speakers in Security Council Stress Need for Coherent Approach to Collective Security” *United Nations*, United Nations.

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