

OAKMUN
2025



Background Guide **UNSC**

Operation Rising Lion: Addressing the escalation of Hostilities between Iran and Israel with special emphasis on regional stability, nuclear non-proliferation and operation Rising Lion.

Freeze Date: June 15th, 2025

Table of Contents

Letter from the Executive Board	Page 3
General Rules of Procedure	Page 5
Introduction to Committee	Page 9
Introduction to agenda	Page 10
Timeline of Key Events	Page 12
Retrospective Events (May 15 – June 15, 2025)	Page 16
Prior UNSC resolutions relevant to the agenda	Page 17
Relevant Portfolios	Page 19
Relevant Legal Principles of the Conflict	Page 21
Definition of Key Terms	Page 25
QARMA (Questions a resolution must answer)	Page 28

Letter from the Executive Board

Greetings Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Committee for the 2025 edition of the SEAMEI Oakridge Model United Nations!

We, the executive board of the Committee, are extremely honored to have you join us at this international platform of diplomacy and debate. The UNSC serves as one of the most crucial bodies in the Model United Nations framework, and success in this committee will demand a strong grasp of foreign policy, an in-depth understanding of crises, and a firm knowledge of international law. Thus the executive board will expect debate at the highest possible level with extensive parley involving the relevant principles of international law, and a solution-oriented approach towards a rapidly escalating crisis, where the hands of millions lie in your actions.

The UNSC is unlike any other committee in MUN; it is the only body where your actions and decisions can have real-life parallels and consequences. Resolutions here are legally binding, setting the UNSC apart from all others where recommendations often whistle past. In addressing the agenda of Operation Rising Lion, your authority is amplified even further in such a crisis. Yet with such power comes responsibility: you must first understand the scope of what you can and cannot do, and then make a pivotal choice; whether to take bold action in shaping the direction of this crisis, or to step back and allow others to lead the charge.

As delegates, you carry the responsibility of addressing some of the most urgent issues facing the world today. You are tasked with formulating unique, innovative yet practical based solutions through rigorous debate, diplomacy, and effective communication supported by hours of extensive research and effort. The topic before you is layered and challenging, impacting millions worldwide. We are here to guide you in navigating these complexities and using your platform effectively, whilst ensuring you that your actions end up creating the impact you intend for them to.

This background guide is intended as the foundation for your research. It contains essential information on organizations, case studies, laws, and terminology to help you comprehend the situation. But it is only the beginning. True domination in this committee requires building upon this knowledge, delving deeper into the agenda, and sharpening your diplomatic strategy. To aid you, we have included references that served as the basis for compiling this material.

While thorough preparation is key, it is your performance during this conference that will ultimately determine your success. Beyond that lies an invaluable opportunity for personal growth, where confidence, creativity, and conviction will define your experience. You can have all the research in the world, but still not lead the committee, unless you decide to take action.

We are committed to creating a supportive, challenging, and inspiring environment—and we look forward to seeing you rise to the occasion.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions. Good luck delegates and godspeed.

Alfred Thomas, Head- Chair

Arnav Keshav, Vice-Chair (arnavkeshav2956@gmail.com)

Ryan Gomez, Moderator (ryanewan80@gmail.com)

General Rules of Procedure

Basic Instructions:

The Executive Board: The Executive Board shall consist of the President and the Vice President of the United Nations Security Council. The ruling of the EB shall be final.

- Diplomatic Courtesy: During committee sessions, Delegates are expected to maintain diplomatic courtesy when addressing fellow Delegates and dais members. All remarks must be made to the President/Vice President. Delegates must rise to address the committee. Delegates may not speak without being recognised by the President/Vice President. All remarks must remain relevant to the topic being currently discussed. Delegates must remain polite and respectful while addressing the committee.
 - (a) All delegates must address themselves and the other delegates in the third person.
 - (b) All delegates must refrain from using personal pronouns unless specifically stated otherwise by the Dais Members.
- Any delegate wishing to speak or make a motion must raise their placard and wait to be recognized by the President/Vice President.

Delegations

Member States: Every committee will have delegations, each with one vote on all issues. In the Security Council, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, the People's Republic of China, the French Republic and the United Kingdom, collectively known as the P5 nations, shall possess the power of Veto.

Non Member States/Observer Missions: The delegate of a nation which is not part of the United Nations, or a nation who holds observer status shall have the same rights as a full member, except he/she may not vote on substantive matters.

All Delegates are expected to know their respective nation's foreign policy. A Delegate who clearly and persistently misinterpret and make statements and take actions against their nation's foreign policy are subject to demarking. Additionally, any behaviour inappropriate in the context of committee shall receive a censure.

General Rules of Procedure

Committee Procedure

Roll Call: At the beginning of each session, the President/Vice President shall proceed to a Roll Call. Each delegation will be called upon in alphabetical order, and may respond with 'Present' or 'Present and Voting'. Any delegate that is 'Present and Voting' may not abstain from voting on substantive matters.

Definition of Majorities:

- Simple Majority: 50% of committee + 1 vote makes up simple majority
- Special Majority: 2/3rds of committee + 1 vote makes up special majority.

Forms of Debate:

Formal Debate: Once the committee has been opened and the agenda has been set, the motion to open the General Speakers List may be raised, where the Delegates wishing to speak present their stance on the agenda for a default time period of 90 seconds. During formal debate, the Delegates speak for a specified amount of time, following which they may yield the left over time to questions, to another Delegate or to the President.

Yields: Delegates can yield their time one of three ways
To the President: The remaining time is forfeit and the committee moves on.

To another Delegate: The delegate may grant the balance to his or her time to another delegate. A delegate who has been yielded may not make any further yields on the remaining time. A yield to another delegate must be informed to the concerned delegate in advance.

To Points of Information: The delegate may use the remainder of his or her time to answer questions posed by other delegates. The President/Vice President shall select delegates to pose questions, and only the time used to respond to questions shall be counted against the speaker's remaining time. The President may cut off a delegate who takes too long to pose a question.

- Motion to open the General Speakers List can be raised as follows: "*The Delegation of _____ would like to raise a motion to open the General Speakers List, setting time per speaker at 90 seconds.*"
- **Suspension of Formal Debate and starting Informal Debate:** During the course of formal debate, a delegate may suspend formal debate by making a motion for a moderated or unmoderated caucus. When making such a motion, the delegate must specify a type of caucus, time limit and in the case of a moderated caucus, a topic and speaking time per speaker.

General Rules of Procedure

The types of Informal Debate are as follows:

- **Unmoderated Caucus:** Delegates may leave their seats, leave the room if necessary, to speak to each other in a less formal setting, or to work on draft resolutions. No points or motions shall be in order during unmoderated caucus. Motion to raise an Unmoderated Caucus can be raised as follows: "*The Delegation of _____ would like to raise a motion to suspend formal debate and move into an unmoderated caucus for __ minutes.*"
- **Moderated Caucus:** Delegates remain in their seats and are recognized by show of placards, at the President's discretion. During a moderated caucus, the President shall call to order delegates who are making speeches not germane to the designated topic. Motion to raise a Moderated Caucus can be raised as follows: "*The Delegation of _____ would like to raise a motion to suspend formal debate and move into a moderated caucus on the topic _____, for __ minutes, setting time __ per speaker.*"

Points that may be raised by Delegates in committee:

- **Point of Order:** A Point of Order may be raised by a delegate to address a factual inaccuracy in a moderated caucus speech by another delegate. Procedural Points of Order directed to the Executive Board regarding lapses in the Rules of Procedure are also in order. A Point of Order may not interrupt a speaker.
- **Point of Parliamentary Procedure:** A Point of Parliamentary Procedure may be raised when a Delegate has a query regarding or requires clarification on the rules of committee procedure. A Point of Parliamentary Procedure may not interrupt a speaker.
- **Point of Personal Privilege:** A Point of Personal Privilege may be raised by a Delegate if/when they face a personal discomfort which hinders their ability to participate in committee, for example, it can be raised if a Delegate is unable to hear what another Delegate is saying. Very pertinent Points of Personal Privilege may interrupt another speaker.
- **Right of Reply:** A Delegate who feels that his/her personal or national integrity has been impugned by another delegate may request from the President a Right to Reply after the other Delegate's remark. The request must be submitted in writing to the President. If granted, the insulted Delegate has thirty seconds to reply to the insult. A verbal request for a Right to Reply cannot interrupt a speaker, and furthermore, a Right of Reply cannot be requested for a Right to Reply. All decisions of the President/Vice President in this regard cannot be appealed.
- **Communication between Delegates:** All communications between Delegates is through chits, sent through members of Logistics. The Delegates may request that the chit be taken to the Dais before being taken to the concerned Delegate. The Delegates may also send chits directly to the Dais.

General Rules of Procedure

Documentation:

Resolution: The final results of discussion, writing and negotiation are resolutions- written suggestions for addressing a specific problem or issue. Resolutions, which are drafted by delegates and voted on by the committee, normally require a simple majority to pass (except in the Security Council, where the P5 nations possess a Veto). Only Security Council resolutions can compel nations to take action. All other UN bodies use resolutions to make recommendations or suggestions for future action. All resolutions must contain Preambulatory Clauses as well as Operative Clauses and must be written in and submitted in the specified format. Documents submitted to the dais in proper resolution format will be considered and referred to as draft resolutions. In the perambulatory clauses, describe the recent history of the situation and the issue as it currently exists. When writing a draft resolution, write it from an international point of view. In the operative clauses, make sure to include all discussed solutions to the problem, not just make statements.

Sponsors and Signatories:

- **Sponsors:** Sponsors are delegates who agree completely with all clauses of a resolution and support it fully. He/She must vote in favour of the resolution, and may not be a sponsor or signatory to any other resolution.
- **Signatories:** A signatory neither agrees nor disagrees completely with the resolution, but feels the need for its debate in committee. A delegate may choose to be a signatory on more than one resolution.

Introduction to Committee

The UNSC is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, it is entrusted with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security across the world thus granting it with more powers and responsibilities in such as well. The UNSC was established under the Charter of the United Nations chapter VII after the devastation of WW2. What makes the UNSC stand out is its ability to make legally binding decisions especially while responding to crises and ensuring that threats to peace are addressed swiftly. Additionally, the scope of its mandate allows for more creative and concrete solutions to be conducted as opposed to other committees.

The Security Council comprises 15 member states: five permanent member (P5) nations, (The United States of America, The People's Republic of China, The Russian Federation, The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the French Republic. and ten non permanent members elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly. The P5 holds special privileges, including the power of veto, which allows any one of them to block the adoption of substantive resolutions, regardless of the majority. For this conference all nations who are not P5 will be considered as non member states unless they represent a government which is not part of the UN, in which they will be considered as observer states.

The UNSC's responsibilities include the establishment of peacekeeping operations, imposition of sanctions, authorization of the use of force, and the referral of cases to international judicial bodies like the International Criminal Court (ICC). The Council also plays a significant role in conflict mediation, post-conflict reconstruction, and the promotion of diplomatic solutions. Resolutions adopted by the UNSC are binding on all member states, giving the Council an authoritative and consequential voice in global governance.

Overview Mandate and Functions of the UNSC - as outlined by Chapter VII of the UN Charter

- 1. Maintenance of International Peace and Security (Article 24):** The UNSC is responsible for maintaining international peace and security, taking action to prevent and resolve conflicts.
- 2. Decision Making (Articles 25 and 27):** All UN Member States are bound to comply with the decisions of the Security Council, which may include sanctions, peacekeeping missions, and military action.
- 3. Collective Action (Article 39):** The UNSC determines the existence of threats to peace, breaches of peace, or acts of aggression. It can recommend or decide on measures to address such situations, including sanctions, military intervention, or other actions.
- 4. Peacekeeping and Sanctions (Articles 41–42):** The UNSC can authorize the use of economic sanctions or military force to restore international peace and security.
- 5. Conflict Resolution (Article 34):** The Council may investigate any situation that could lead to a dispute or cause international friction.
- 6. Role in the Use of Force (Article 43):** The UNSC can authorize collective military action by Member States to enforce its decisions.
- 7. Peace Settlements (Article 33):** It encourages the peaceful resolution of conflicts through negotiation, mediation, and other peaceful means.

Introduction to Agenda

The Middle East has long been described as a geopolitical powder keg: a region where ethnic, religious, and ideological tensions intersect with great-power rivalries and energy geopolitics. Among the most enduring and destabilizing conflicts in this region is the hostility between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the State of Israel.

What began as an ideological and political rivalry has, over the decades, evolved into a confrontation spanning proxy wars, cyber-operations, targeted assassinations, and direct military exchanges. As of the freeze date of June 15th, 2025, this rivalry has reached a dangerous threshold with **Operation Rising Lion**, a military campaign whose implications stretch beyond bilateral hostilities to questions of nuclear non-proliferation, regional stability, and international law.

Iran's worldview and foreign policy were heavily shaped by the 1979 Islamic Revolution, which openly rejected Western influence and labeled Israel as an illegitimate state: often referred to by Tehran as the "Zionist entity." Iran's regional ambitions, framed under the concept of "exporting the revolution," have relied heavily on supporting non-state actors such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Gaza, and Shi'a militias across Iraq and Syria. Israel, on the other hand, perceives Iran's growing influence as an existential threat, particularly in light of Tehran's ballistic missile program and its controversial nuclear activities. This asymmetry has fostered a cycle of covert action and retaliation: Israel has reportedly carried out cyber operations against Iran's nuclear facilities (e.g., the Stuxnet attack in 2010), conducted targeted killings of nuclear scientists, and struck Iranian positions in Syria, while Iran has retaliated through proxy attacks, maritime disruptions in the Persian Gulf, and missile strikes on Israeli and allied targets.

The nuclear dimension remains central to this crisis. Iran is a signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), but its compliance has been contested for decades. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), signed in 2015, temporarily restricted Iran's enrichment activities in exchange for sanctions relief. However, following the U.S. withdrawal from the agreement in 2018 and Iran's gradual reduction of compliance, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has repeatedly warned of Iran's advancing enrichment capabilities — raising fears that Tehran could achieve "nuclear breakout" in a short timeframe. Israel, which has never officially confirmed nor denied its possession of nuclear weapons but is widely regarded as a de facto nuclear power, views any Iranian nuclear capability as a casus belli. Israel's doctrine of preemptive self-defense, invoked in past cases such as the 1981 bombing of Iraq's Osirak reactor (Operation Opera) and the 2007 strike on Syria's Al-Kibar facility (Operation Orchard), underscores its willingness to act unilaterally if it perceives an existential threat. Operation Rising Lion thus represents not merely a military campaign but a potential turning point in the longstanding struggle over nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

Introduction to Agenda

Beyond nuclear concerns, the regional security architecture itself is in jeopardy. Escalations between Iran and Israel reverberate across multiple conflict zones: In Lebanon, Hezbollah's extensive rocket arsenal and integration into the political system mean any Israeli-Iranian confrontation risks dragging the country into war. In Syria, where Iranian forces and proxies maintain a significant presence, Israeli airstrikes are frequent, and renewed escalation could ignite dormant frontlines. In the Gulf region, maritime incidents targeting oil tankers and infrastructure in the Strait of Hormuz directly threaten global energy supplies. In Gaza, Iranian support for Hamas and Islamic Jihad ensures that Israeli-Palestinian flare-ups are deeply tied to Tehran's wider regional agenda.

These conflicts are further complicated by the involvement of global powers. The United States continues to provide unwavering security assistance to Israel while maintaining military deployments in the Gulf. Russia, aligned with Iran in Syria, views the Middle East as a critical sphere of influence, while China's dependence on Gulf energy supplies pushes it toward balancing regional stability with economic partnerships. The intersection of great-power rivalry with regional hostilities means any miscalculation risks spiraling into a conflict of global proportions.

For the United Nations Security Council, the stakes could not be higher on the day you enter the committee. The UNSC is the only international body empowered to make legally binding decisions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Its mandate requires balancing Israel's invocation of its inherent right to self-defense under Article 51 against Iran's claims of sovereignty, non-intervention, and the peaceful use of nuclear technology under Article IV of the NPT. Furthermore, international humanitarian law imposes strict obligations on the conduct of hostilities: the principles of distinction, proportionality, and necessity apply regardless of whether advanced weapons or cyber-attacks are employed. Operation Rising Lion will therefore test not only the resolve of the international community but also the credibility of international legal frameworks designed to prevent escalation and proliferation.

Timeline of Key Events

- **1947:** Iran votes against the UN Partition Plan for Palestine, opposing the creation of Israel.
- **May 14, 1948:** British Mandate over Palestine ends. State of Israel proclaimed.
- **May 15, 1948:** Five Arab states invade newly declared Israel. Israel Defense Forces (IDF) established. War of Independence begins (May 1948-July 1949).
- **1949:** Armistice agreements signed between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon. Jerusalem divided under Israeli and Jordanian rule. First Knesset elected. Israel admitted to United Nations as 59th member.
- **1950:** Iran becomes the second Muslim-majority nation (after Turkey) to recognize Israel, despite strong domestic opposition.
- **1951:** Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh revokes Iran's recognition of Israel due to popular pressure.
- **1953:** CIA-engineered coup overthrows Mossadegh's government, restoring Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to power. Iran-Israel relations are restored and begin flourishing under Pahlavi regime.
- **1953-1979:** "Golden Age" of Iran-Israel Relations under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. Iran supplies 40% of Israel's oil needs, bypassing Arab oil embargo. Extensive military cooperation includes Israeli supply of modern weapons and joint intelligence operations through SAVAK (established 1957). Joint projects include Eilat-Ashkelon Pipeline Company (1968) and Project Flower missile development.
- **1954:** Gamal Abdel Nasser becomes President of Egypt, negotiates complete withdrawal of British troops from Suez Canal.
- **1956:** Egypt nationalizes Suez Canal. Suez Crisis ensues with Israel undertaking Sinai Campaign.
- **1964:** National Water Carrier completed in Israel. Palestine Liberation Organization formed.
- **1966:** Egypt signs mutual defense pact with Syria.
- **1967:** Six-Day War. Israel fully occupies Jerusalem and captures West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights. Arab League adopts Khartoum Resolution.
- **1968:** Eilat-Ashkelon Pipeline Company established as joint Iran-Israel project.
- **1968-70:** Egypt's War of Attrition against Israel.
- **1973:** Yom Kippur War.
- **1974:** Israeli withdrawal from territories beyond 1967 ceasefire line.
- **1977:** Egyptian President Anwar Sadat visits Jerusalem.
- **1978:** Camp David Accords signed.

Timeline of Key Events

- **1979:** Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty signed. Begin and Sadat awarded Nobel Peace Prize. **Iranian Revolution:** Ayatollah Khomeini overthrows Shah, establishing Islamic Republic. Iran immediately severs diplomatic relations with Israel, closes Israeli Embassy, and declares Israel "enemy of Islam" and "Little Satan".
- **1980:** Iran launches Operation Scorch Sword, conducting first-ever airstrike on a nuclear reactor, targeting Iraq's under-construction Osirak facility.
- **1981:** Anwar Sadat assassinated. **June 7:** Israel conducts Operation Opera, completely destroying Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor with precision airstrike, establishing the "Begin Doctrine" of preemptive action against nuclear threats.
- **1982:** Israel's three-stage withdrawal from Sinai completed. Egypt establishes full diplomatic relations with Israel. Israel launches Operation Peace for Galilee, invading Lebanon to expel PLO. Iran seizes opportunity to establish proxy presence, sending 1,500 IRGC instructors to Syria and Lebanon.
- **November 11, 1982:** Early Hezbollah operation kills 75 Israeli soldiers in explosion at military headquarters in Tyre.
- **October 23, 1983:** Coordinated suicide bombings strike U.S. Marines and French forces in Beirut, killing 241 Americans and 58 French soldiers. Attacks attributed to Iranian-backed groups.
- **1984:** Sheikh Ragheb Harb, leader of southern Shiite resistance, killed by Israel.
- **February 16, 1985:** Hezbollah formally announces existence with publication of manifesto, pledging allegiance to Iran's Supreme Leader Khomeini and vowing to destroy Israel.
- **1987:** First Palestinian Intifada begins.
- **1993:** Oslo Accords signed between Israel and PLO.
- **1994:** Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty signed. Rabin, Peres, and Arafat awarded Nobel Peace Prize.
- **1995:** Broadened Palestinian self-government implemented. Israeli Prime Minister Rabin assassinated.
- **1999:** Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum signed between Israel and PLO.
- **2000:** Camp David talks break down. Second Intifada begins. Israel withdraws from southern Lebanon.
- **2002:** Iran's clandestine nuclear facilities at Natanz and Arak revealed by opposition groups, triggering international alarm. Israel launches Operation Defensive Shield and begins construction of security barrier.

Timeline of Key Events

- **2005:** Israel implements Gaza Disengagement Plan.
- **2006:** Major escalation as Hezbollah and Israel fight 34-day war. Demonstrates Iran's investment in proxy capabilities with Hezbollah firing over 4,000 rockets into Israel. Hamas wins Palestinian elections, creating split in Palestinian Authority.
- **2007:** Israel declares Gaza "hostile territory" following Hamas takeover. **January 15:** Ardeshir Hosseinpour, nuclear physicist, dies under mysterious circumstances. Iranian authorities suspect Israeli involvement.
- **2008:** Israel launches Operation Cast Lead in Gaza.
- **2010:**
 - **January 12 2010:** Masoud Ali-Mohammadi, physics professor, killed by remote-controlled bomb in Tehran.
 - **November 29 2010:** Coordinated assassinations target Iranian nuclear scientists Majid Shahriari (killed) and Fereydoon Abbasi-Davani (wounded). **Stuxnet cyberattack** peaks, destroying nearly 1,000 uranium enrichment centrifuges at Natanz facility—first known cyberweapon causing physical infrastructure damage, joint U.S.-Israeli operation.
- **2011: July 23:** Dariush Rezaeinejad, electrical engineer, killed by motorcycle-borne gunmen in Tehran. Syrian Civil War begins, providing Iran opportunity to entrench IRGC and proxy forces in Syria. Israel begins routine airstrikes targeting Iranian positions.
- **2012:** Additional Stuxnet attacks reported against Iranian power infrastructure.
- **2015:** Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) signed between Iran, P5+1 powers, and EU, restricting Iranian nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief. Israel strongly opposes agreement.
- **2017:** U.S. shifts embassy to Jerusalem.
- **2018:** Trump administration withdraws U.S. from JCPOA and re-imposes "maximum pressure" sanctions. Iran gradually reduces compliance with nuclear restrictions. Palestine initiates ICJ proceedings against U.S. over embassy relocation.
- **2019:** U.S. announces Israeli settlements in West Bank do not violate international law.
- **2020:** U.S. conducts airstrikes in Iran, assassinating Major General Qasem Soleimani of IRGC Quds Force.
 - **January 3 2020 :** Major escalation as U.S. assassinates IRGC Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani in Baghdad drone strike. Iran retaliates with ballistic missile strikes on U.S. bases in Iraq.
 - **November 27 2020:** Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, Iran's top nuclear scientist, killed in sophisticated remote-controlled attack near Tehran.

Timeline of Key Events

- **2021-2022:** Escalating cycle of covert operations with assassinations targeting Iranian nuclear scientists and military officials. Iran responds with attacks on Israeli-linked shipping in Persian Gulf. Cyber warfare intensifies.
- **2023:** Israel allegedly strikes Iranian drone and missile facilities in Syria. Hezbollah expands rocket stockpiles with Iranian support. Iran crosses uranium enrichment levels beyond JCPOA limits.[13]
- **2024:** Rising cyber confrontations with Israeli infrastructure facing attacks attributed to Iranian hackers. Israel retaliates with cyber intrusions into Iranian defense networks. Maritime incidents escalate in Strait of Hormuz.
- **March 2025:** Iran increases enriched uranium stockpile to 275 kg of 60% highly enriched uranium, bringing breakout time to one week or less.
- **April 2025:** Trump Administration re-engages in nuclear talks with Iran through Oman intermediary.
- **June 13, 2025:** Operation Rising Lion begins. Israel launches massive surprise attack on Iranian nuclear facilities, military bases, and infrastructure with over 200 fighter jets deploying 330+ munitions against ~100 targets. Key targets include Natanz, Fordow, and Isfahan nuclear facilities. Multiple IRGC leaders killed including Chief Hossein Salami and Armed Forces Chief Mohammad Bagheri. Nuclear scientists assassinated in coordinated operations.

Retrospective Events

(May 15 – June 15, 2025)

In the month leading up to the freeze date, the conflict between Israel and Iran escalated dramatically on multiple fronts. Between May 15 and 20, Israel intensified Operation Rising Lion with deep strikes on Iran's Natanz enrichment facilities and western missile sites, prompting Hezbollah to unleash over a thousand rockets into northern Israel while Iran retaliated with ballistic missiles and drones targeting Tel Aviv, Haifa, and southern military bases. By late May, the conflict had spilled into the maritime domain, with drone and mine attacks on oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz disrupting global shipping and driving oil prices above \$140 per barrel, while the United States increased naval patrols to secure the region's shipping lanes.

From May 26 to 30, the confrontation extended into cyberspace: Iranian hackers temporarily disabled parts of Israel's energy grid, and Israel responded by breaching Iran's defense ministry networks. At the same time, pro-Iranian militias in Iraq and Syria launched attacks on US bases, raising fears of a broader regional war. The humanitarian cost also surged: by early June, casualties had surpassed 4,000 across Israel, Iran, Lebanon, and Gaza, and more than one million people had been displaced, with hospitals in Tehran, Haifa, and Beirut overwhelmed by the influx of wounded civilians. Calls for humanitarian corridors grew louder, though security conditions remained unstable.

Diplomatic polarization sharpened in the first week of June. The United States doubled down on its military support for Israel, deploying additional missile defense systems, while Russia and China condemned Israel's unilateral actions and warned of regional destabilization. The European Union attempted to mediate a ceasefire but remained divided over whether to impose new sanctions on Iran. Meanwhile, the Arab League held an extraordinary session in Cairo, denouncing Israeli "aggression" and pressing for urgent Security Council intervention.

Finally, in the days immediately preceding the freeze date, international concern peaked after the IAEA confirmed that Iran was enriching uranium close to weapons-grade levels, reducing its breakout time to under three months. Israeli intelligence warned of an imminent nuclear capability, and Saudi Arabia publicly suggested it might pursue its own nuclear program should Iran succeed. These developments brought the crisis to a head, forcing the United Nations Security Council to convene on June 15, 2025, under Chapter VII to debate the legality of Israel's anticipatory strikes, address the humanitarian fallout, stabilize the regional security architecture, and prevent further nuclear proliferation.

Prior UNSC resolutions relevant to the agenda

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1696 (2006):

The first resolution demanded Iran suspend all uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities. Passed under Chapter VII, it warned of sanctions if Iran failed to comply.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1737 (2006):

Imposed initial sanctions targeting Iran's nuclear and missile programs. Included an asset freeze on individuals and entities linked to proliferation.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1747 (2007):

Expanded sanctions by prohibiting Iranian arms exports and increasing restrictions on financial transactions. Strengthened measures against the IRGC.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1803 (2008):

Introduced enhanced monitoring of Iranian banks, travel bans on officials, and cargo inspections suspected of carrying nuclear-related items.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1929 (2010):

The most extensive pre-JCPOA sanctions package. It banned Iran from developing ballistic missiles, expanded the arms embargo, and authorized inspection of Iranian cargo. Targeted the IRGC with broad financial restrictions.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015):

Endorsed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Provided for the lifting of nuclear-related sanctions in exchange for Iranian compliance and created a “snapback” mechanism for re-imposing sanctions in case of violations.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 (1967):

Following the Six-Day War, called for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and recognition of every state in the region. Became a cornerstone of Middle East peace negotiations.

Prior UNSC resolutions relevant to the agenda

United Nations Security Council Resolution 338 (1973):

Called for a ceasefire in the Yom Kippur War and reaffirmed Resolution 242 as the foundation for a just and lasting peace.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 425 (1978):

Demanded Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon following its invasion and established UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon).

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006): Ended the Israel–Hezbollah war, mandated cessation of hostilities, reinforced UNIFIL, and prohibited arms transfers to Hezbollah.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004): Although not specific to Iran or Israel, it required all states to prevent non-state actors from acquiring WMDs. Frequently cited in relation to Hezbollah, Hamas, and Iran's proliferation networks.

Relevant Portfolios

United States of America (USA):

The United States remains Israel's strongest ally, providing advanced missile defense systems, intelligence, and diplomatic cover in the Security Council. Washington frames Israel's actions under Article 51 of the UN Charter as legitimate self-defense, while condemning Iran's nuclear advances and regional proxy networks. At the same time, the US is wary of uncontrolled escalation, as it could endanger its forces stationed across Iraq, Syria, and the Gulf. Its key priority is to ensure Israel's security while preserving freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, essential for global energy markets.

Israel:

As the initiator of Operation Rising Lion, Israel's portfolio is central to the conflict. Invoking its doctrine of anticipatory self-defense, Israel argues that Iran's near-breakout nuclear status left it no choice but to strike enrichment facilities. Its military actions aim to prevent Iran from achieving nuclear capability while weakening Hezbollah's capacity. However, Israel faces mounting international criticism for civilian casualties and for striking safeguarded nuclear sites. Its challenge lies in justifying legality under international law while maintaining deterrence against Iran and its proxies.

Islamic Republic of Iran:

Iran's position is built on sovereignty and the right to pursue peaceful nuclear technology under Article IV of the NPT. It views Israel's strikes as unlawful aggression and "nuclear terrorism." Tehran leverages its network of proxies: Hezbollah in Lebanon, militias in Iraq and Syria, and ties with Hamas and Islamic Jihad: to widen the conflict against Israel and pressure the US. With its nuclear breakout time down to mere weeks, Iran uses the threat of escalation as leverage in international negotiations while demanding UNSC condemnation of Israel.

Russian Federation:

Russia supports Iran diplomatically and militarily, especially in Syria, where both coordinate against Western influence. Moscow views Operation Rising Lion as unlawful aggression and a dangerous precedent for unilateral military strikes. It seeks to use its veto power to block pro-Israeli resolutions and position itself as a counterweight to the US in the Middle East. However, Russia is also cautious about a regional war that could destabilize energy markets and complicate its partnerships with Gulf states.

Relevant Portfolios

People's Republic of China:

China's primary concern is energy security, as it relies heavily on Gulf oil passing through the Strait of Hormuz. Beijing has invested diplomatic capital in the 2023 Saudi-Iran détente and seeks to act as a mediator, balancing relations with both Iran and Israel. At the UNSC, China is likely to oppose unilateral military strikes and favor restraint, ceasefires, and diplomatic solutions. Its stance emphasizes sovereignty, non-intervention, and the prevention of global economic shocks.

France & United Kingdom:

Both European powers are formally aligned with the United States and have historically supported Israel's right to defend itself. However, they are more cautious about escalation, stressing international humanitarian law, proportionality, and civilian protection. They also push for renewed negotiations on the JCPOA framework under UNSC Resolution 2231, fearing that uncontrolled conflict will accelerate nuclear proliferation in the region.

Saudi Arabia:

Caught between its rapprochement with Iran (brokered by China in 2023) and its quiet coordination with Israel and the US, Saudi Arabia faces a delicate balancing act. While officially condemning Israeli strikes, Riyadh fears a nuclear Iran more than Israeli aggression. Rising oil prices benefit the Saudi economy in the short term, but instability in the Gulf threatens its long-term security. Its nuclear hedging hinting at pursuing nuclear weapons if Iran does, adds another layer of urgency for non-proliferation.

Lebanon (via Hezbollah):

Lebanon is a frontline state in this conflict due to Hezbollah's massive involvement. While Hezbollah presents itself as Iran's strongest proxy, Lebanon's civilian population is suffering from heavy Israeli bombardments. The Lebanese state is fragile, its economy in freefall, and another full-scale war could plunge the country into collapse. The UNSC must balance addressing Hezbollah's role with ensuring humanitarian relief for Lebanon's civilian population.

Egypt & Jordan:

Both states act as traditional mediators in Arab-Israeli conflicts. Egypt, controlling Gaza's southern border, faces pressure to facilitate humanitarian corridors, while Jordan risks being overwhelmed by refugee inflows. Both governments are aligned with the US and Gulf monarchies but must balance this with strong domestic opposition to Israel's military actions.

Relevant Legal Principles to the Conflict

Jus ad Bellum: Resort to Force

Under Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, all member states are prohibited from using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. Israel has constantly justified Operation Rising Lion under Article 51, invoking the right of self-defense. The key legal principle here is the Caroline test: necessity must be instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means, and no moment for deliberation to allow for such an act of force. The debate is whether Rising Lion constitutes anticipatory self-defense against an imminent Iranian threat or whether it is unlawful preventive war, which international law largely rejects. States also have a duty to report self-defense actions immediately to the Security Council under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Regionally, the Arab League Charter (1945) articles 5 and 6 and its Collective Defense Treaty (1950)'s articles 2 and 3 prohibit aggression against member states and frame collective security in the Middle East, though Israel is not a member. The Tehran Communiqués from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have consistently condemned preemptive strikes in the region, reinforcing a political but influential normative framework against unilateral force.

Jus in Bello: Classification and Conduct of Hostilities

Since Operation Rising Lion involves direct armed confrontation between Israel and Iran, the conflict is classified as an International Armed Conflict (IAC) under Common Article 2 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions. Both states are bound by the four Geneva Conventions, and by customary International Humanitarian Law (IHL) regardless of their treaty reservations.

Key basic legal principles at play include:

- Principle of Distinction (AP I, art. 48; customary rule): parties must distinguish between civilians and combatants, and between civilian objects and military objectives.
- Principle of Proportionality (AP I, art. 51(5)(b)): even if a target is lawful, incidental civilian harm must not be excessive in relation to the concrete military advantage.
- Principle of Precaution (AP I, art. 57): all feasible precautions must be taken to avoid or minimize civilian harm.

Objects containing dangerous forces: nuclear power stations, dams, and similar infrastructure, are specially protected under AP I, art. 56, reflecting both treaty and customary law. Even though Israel has not ratified Additional Protocol I and Iran only signed it, these rules are considered customary norms, binding both states.

Relevant Legal Principles to the Conflict

Martens Clause

First introduced in the 1899 Hague Convention, the Martens Clause provides that in cases not covered by existing treaties, civilians and combatants remain under the protection of the “principles of humanity” and the dictates of public conscience.” This means that even if Israel claims a legal grey zone over preventive nuclear strikes, the operation can still be evaluated under broader humanitarian principles. The Clause is powerful in debate because it shifts the burden: legality isn’t just about codified law, but about whether actions violate basic humanity and conscience.

2. Principle of Non-Recognition (Stimson Doctrine)

International law holds that states cannot legally recognize territorial or political situations created through the unlawful use of force. Though traditionally applied to annexations, this doctrine has expanded to include outcomes of unlawful military action. In Rising Lion, if Israel’s actions are framed as unlawful aggression, other states would be legally bound under this principle not to recognize any strategic “facts on the ground” it seeks to establish (such as a weakened Iranian nuclear program gained through force). It’s a sharp tool for pressing the *illegality* angle.

Obligations Erga Omnes

Certain obligations in international law, such as prohibitions on genocide, aggression, and crimes against humanity, are owed to the international community as a whole. This principle, developed in cases like *Barcelona Traction* (1970), means that even states not directly affected by Rising Lion could claim standing to challenge Israel’s actions if they breached erga omnes obligations. It reframes the debate: this is not just a bilateral Israel–Iran matter, but a collective concern of all states under international law.

Lex specialis derogat legi generali

In international law, the principle of *lex specialis* means that the more specific law prevails over the general. During armed conflict, International Humanitarian Law (IHL) operates as the lex specialis in relation to International Human Rights Law (IHRL). For Operation Rising Lion, this means that questions over the right to life or civilian protection are not judged in abstract human-rights terms, but through IHL standards of distinction, proportionality, and precaution. The ICJ’s *Nuclear Weapons Advisory Opinion* (1996) reinforced this approach, making it clear that battlefield actions must be evaluated primarily under humanitarian law, not ordinary peacetime standards.

Relevant Legal Principles to the Conflict

Weapons and Methods of Warfare

Operation Rising Lion reportedly involved drones and precision-guided munitions. Under customary IHL, indiscriminate weapons and methods causing superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering are prohibited. The prohibition of perfidy (AP I, art. 37) forbids feigning protected status (e.g., using civilian disguises), while ruses of war such as decoys and electronic deception remain lawful. Regional law echoes these principles: the Arab League's 1994 Cairo Declaration on Humanitarian Law encouraged adherence to distinction and proportionality even in conflicts involving non-member states.

Nuclear and Environmental Safeguards

Because Rising Lion targeted nuclear-linked sites, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and IAEA Safeguards Agreement are relevant. Iran, as an NPT party, must not divert nuclear material to military use. Attacking safeguarded facilities raises questions under international environmental law:

- The ENMOD Convention (1976) prohibits hostile environmental modification.
- Customary IHL and AP I, arts. 35(3) & 55, forbid methods of warfare expected to cause widespread, long-term, and severe damage to the natural environment.

Regionally, the Kuwait Regional Convention on Marine Environment Protection (1978) and its Protocols bind Gulf states, including Iran, imposing obligations to prevent pollution or destruction of marine ecosystems. Strikes that risk radioactive or chemical release in the Gulf could trigger state responsibility under these frameworks.

Accountability and Regional Fora

Potential war crimes include intentionally disproportionate strikes on civilians or civilian infrastructure. While Israel and Iran are not parties to the Rome Statute of the ICC, accountability may arise through universal jurisdiction (states prosecuting grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions) or a UNSC referral. Regionally, the OIC and Arab League provide political fora for condemnation, though not judicial enforcement.

Relevant Legal Principles to the Conflict

Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstić (ICTY, 2001) – *Srebrenica Genocide Case*

Krstić, a Bosnian Serb commander, was convicted of aiding and abetting genocide and war crimes for his role in the massacre of over 7,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica (1995). This case thus now set two useful precedents relevant for Operation Rising lion:

- 1) Command Responsibility: senior officers can be held accountable even if they did not personally carry out attacks.
- 2) Targeting Civilians as War Crimes: intentional or disproportionate attacks on civilians in armed conflict can lead to international prosecution.

Some of you delegates could argue, *As seen in the Krstić judgment before the ICTY, commanders directing attacks on civilian populations were held liable for war crimes. Should Operation Rising Lion result in disproportionate civilian harm, commanders on either side could face similar scrutiny even if Israel and Iran are not ICC members, universal jurisdiction or UNSC referral remain legal pathways.* It's up to those who now have to defend such a stance via research and ingenuity to find out how to retip the scales in their favor again.

Definition of Key Terms

Zionism

It is the ideology that sought “*to secure for the Jewish people a publicly recognized, legally assured homeland in Palestine.*” Begun by Theodor Herzl, the ideology developed into several subsections over the course of history, with the common goal of uniting all Jewish people with the eventual formation of a Jewish State.

Anti-Semitism

As acknowledged by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), “*anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews.*” The FRA also recognizes that “*rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.*”

The most widely accepted definition of antisemitism is the Working Definition adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). The FRA further outlines that contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, media, schools, workplaces, and religious spheres may include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such, or the power of Jews collectively (e.g., the myth of a world Jewish conspiracy or Jews controlling media, economy, government, or other societal institutions).
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g., gas chambers), or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to alleged global Jewish priorities, than to the interests of their own nations.

Definition of Key Terms

Examples of antisemitism with regard to the State of Israel include:

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination (e.g., claiming that the existence of the State of Israel is a racist endeavor).
- Applying double standards by requiring of Israel a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using symbols or images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for the actions of the State of Israel.

Pan-Arabism

The ideology that all Arab people must unite to constitute a single Arab state, reclaiming what was considered rightfully their land. President Gamal Abdel Nasser championed this ideology and played a key role in the formation of the United Arab Republic in 1958, which united Syria and Egypt into a single sovereign state.

Statehood

The principal subjects of international law and accepted as international persons, a State was defined on 20 November 1991 in Opinion No. 1 of the Arbitration Commission of the European Conference on Yugoslavia as "*a community which consists of a territory and a population subject to an organised political authority, characterized by sovereignty.*"

The most widely accepted criteria for statehood are laid down by the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, which lists four prerequisites:

- A permanent population
- A defined territory
- A government
- The capacity to enter into relations with other States

Note: International law does not specify a minimum population or settled boundaries, but the entity must control a consistent band of territory.

Definition of Key Terms

Two-State Solution

A proposed solution to conflicting claims over the same land by partially acknowledging both claims and dividing the disputed area between the parties.

For example, the 1967 Allon Plan suggested splitting parts of the West Bank with Palestine, later refined to split the region with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Under this plan, Israel would retain the Jordan Valley, Gush Etzion, parts of the Hebron foothills, and East Jerusalem, while offering the rest (including populated areas like Jericho) to Jordan. This was Israel's first modern proposal of a two-state solution.

One-State Solution

The suggestion that a disputed territory can, in the end, belong entirely to one of the claimants rather than being divided.

Questions a resolution must answer (QARMA's)

These are the questions that your resolution must be focused on and addressed in order for it to be presented in committee and additionally successfully address the agenda.

1. What should the Security Council's determination be on whether Israel's Operation Rising Lion constitutes legitimate anticipatory self-defense or an act of unlawful aggression under international law, including the application of specialized legal principles like the Martens Clause and erga omnes obligations?
2. How does the International Community legally hold accountable sovereign states for acting via proxy groups and non state actors?
3. How can fundamental legal documents such as the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty and the Arms Trade Treaty be strengthened to mitigate such future occurrences?
4. What future trajectories for Iran's nuclear programme are plausible, and which enhanced safeguards, verification, and enforcement modalities should be developed; drawing lessons from JCPOA implementation, how might Member States craft a more robust, durable, and legally enforceable arrangement under appropriate international auspices?
5. What urgent steps can the Security Council take to de-escalate hostilities between Israel and Iran, including ceasefire arrangements, third-party mediation, and peacekeeping deployments?
6. How should the UNSC ensure the protection of civilian populations, critical infrastructure, and humanitarian corridors during the conflict, in accordance with IHL, the Geneva Conventions, and other relevant legal frameworks?
7. What mechanisms should be established to investigate potential violations of international law, including the targeting of nuclear facilities, and how should bodies like the ICC, ICJ, or special investigative commissions be utilized?
8. How can the Council prevent the spread of conflict to neighboring states, manage regional security vacuums, and coordinate with bodies such as the Arab League and OIC?

NOTE: The QARMA solely serves as guide for the flow of debate and what are the expectations of the executive board for final documentation but in no manner whatsoever should it influence the topics in moderated caucuses. Any solution you have must be stated in committee via the general speakers list or moderated caucus speech for it to be used or via substantive to ensure authentic resolutions

Questions a resolution must answer (QARMA's)

Suggested Research

The background guide is only a stepping stone to your research but it should never be your only source. We heavily recommend you conduct the following practices

- Read through relevant UNSC resolutions and analyze their implications legally
- Understand events going on in the region such as outbursts, protests, conflicts or scandals
- Articles documenting the situation often from REUTERS
- Statements from your government officials to better understand your current Foreign Policy
- Case Laws by a competent international arbitral body/court which can be used as precedence for existing actions
- How similar events were tackled in the past and with what solutions form the United Nations and outside the United Nations

Good luck once again delegates and godspeed!