United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 1982

Introduction

The United Nations Security Council, or UNSC, was established in the Charter of the United Nations in 1945 with the mandate of maintaining peace and security across the world.[1] The UNSC is the United Nation's smallest and most powerful organ with fifteen members. Ten of the members are rotating members, representing each of the world's regions. Rotating members are elected for two-year, non-consecutive terms. The rest of the Security Council is composed of five permanent members (referred to as the P5). In 1982, the P5 consists of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and the French Republic. Each of the P5 possess what is known as veto power. This means that a UNSC resolution cannot pass if one of the P5 votes no. A vote of abstention does not count as invoking the veto.

There are several aspects of the UNSC's mandate that makes it more powerful than other bodies in the U.N. and makes it unique in its operations within the U.N. system. The most significant of these is that the UNSC is the only U.N. body with the authority to impose binding resolutions on U.N. Member States. This means that the UNSC functions as the crisis management body of the U.N. by responding to immediate threats to international security. The UNSC has a much greater toolbox of potential responses at its disposal, including setting up peace negotiations, imposing sanctions, or even authorizing the use of force. Sanctions options include arms embargoes, travel bans, asset freezes for specific individuals and organizations, and import/export bans on individual goods. As for the use of force, theoretical options range from humanitarian intervention to campaigns led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In reality, the UNSC has trouble enacting its most powerful responses, as P5 member states differ in their preferred responses to conflict.

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[1] The UN Security Council

Committee Background

The Cold War

Background

The Cold War refers to a historical era defined by a decades-long rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union (USSR), the world's two preeminent economic and military superpowers at the time, who each sought global dominance. The conflict was rooted in an ideological split between the two states. While the United States sought to protect and expand democracy and capitalism, the Soviet Union subscribed to a communist economic model coupled with centralized, authoritarian leadership. The USSR saw the United States as Western imperialists whose capitalist system was oppressive and fraught with contradictions. Meanwhile, the United States believed the Soviet Union posed an existential and expansionist threat to its liberal system. In the minds of both, the two could not co-exist.

The Cold War represents what many international security scholars refer to as a bipolar world order. Bipolarity is a system of international order in which two competing powers control global economic, military, and political relations, resulting in other states choosing to ally with one of them.[2] As the United States and the Soviet Union made their opposition to each other clear, each sought to expand their sphere of influence to other countries. The contrapositive of this was true as well. U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "domino theory" contended that the fall of one country to communism would lead other countries in the area to follow. This thinking shaped much of the United States' approach to intervening in Cold War-era conflicts.[3]

A Brief History

Tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States first arose in the aftermath of World War II during negotiations over the occupation of Germany after the Nazis were defeated. As tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States grew, both states quickly rushed to shore up allies and influence in their respective spheres. A public example of this came in 1947, when U.S. President Harry S. Truman released the Truman Doctrine, which stated that the United States would provide aid to all nations under threat from external or internal authoritarian forces.[4] This decision was guided by a containment policy. First articulated by George Kennan, containment expressed the political necessity to prevent communism from spreading any further than it already had.

As a result of these growing tensions, in 1949 the United States established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a military alliance between several Western countries. NATO was

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[2] The politics of bipolarity and IPE in contemporary times
[3] President Eisenhower delivers Cold War "domino theory" speech - HISTORY
[4] The Truman Doctrine, 1947

most famously known for Article 5 of its founding treaty, which created a collective defense pact, meaning an attack against one NATO member was treated like an attack against all of its members.[5] The 12 founding members of NATO were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States.[6] The Soviet Union responded in 1955 with the Warsaw Pact, a military alliance between the communist governments of Eastern Europe. The founding members of the Warsaw Pact were the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Albania.[7] These two blocs would serve as the opposing forces throughout most of the Cold War, led by their respective superpowers.
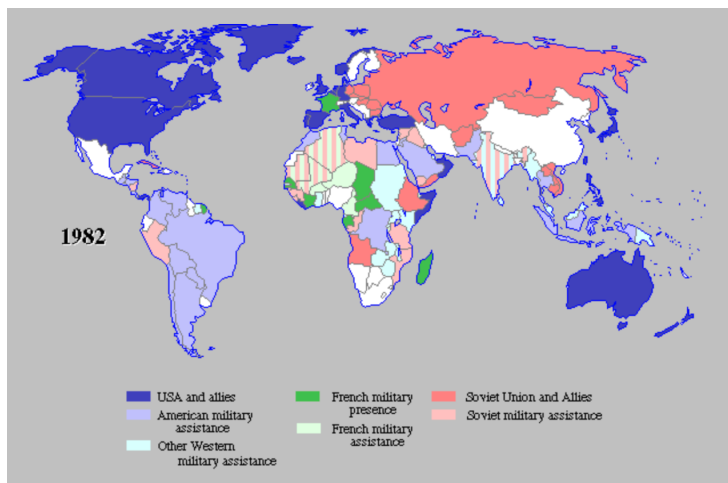
MAP OF US AND USSR GLOBAL MILITARY PRESENCE IN 1982[8]

Throughout the late 1950s until 1982, the United States and the Soviet Union opposed each other on a variety of fronts. The first of these were proxy wars, which are wars between certain entities instigated by major powers that are not directly involved.[9] Throughout the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union often intervened in other countries' affairs to gain political allies or prevent their rival from gaining a potential ally. These proxy wars wreaked havoc throughout the global South, resulting in political disruptions with lasting impact.

The second area of opposition was nuclear research and weaponry. The first atomic bombs were dropped by the United States on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan in 1945, effectively ending World War II.[10] Since then, the U.S. and USSR raced to advance nuclear technology and stockpile nuclear weapons. The positioning of nuclear weapons has led to some of the Cold War's most climactic moments, such as the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.[11] After the world stood

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[5] NATO - Topic: Collective defence and Article 5
[6] NATO - Topic: Member countries.
[7] NATO - Declassified: What was the Warsaw Pact?
[8] Map - Cold War 1960-1991
[9] Col War facts and information
[10] Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
[11] https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis

on the brink of apocalyptic nuclear warfare throughout the 1950s and 60s, the U.S. and USSR came to an understanding called mutually assured destruction (MAD), giving the power to destroy the other with nuclear weapons.[12] MAD was a significant reason the United States and the Soviet Union never engaged in direct conflict.

By 1982, significant progress had been made on the issue of denuclearization, which refers to the effort to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, nuclear weapons due to the existential threat they pose. In 1972, the United States and the Soviet Union signed the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I). In it, they agreed to limit the number of anti-ballistic missiles (ABM), not to manufacture strategic weapons for a period of five years, and not to construct land-based launchers.[13] However, nuclear peace continued to be a tenuous prospect. Other states seeking to increase their security have developed nuclear weapons of their own, even as much of the international community continues to push for denuclearization through platforms such as the United Nations. These include the United Kingdom, France, and the People's Republic of China.[14] Additionally, the United States and the Soviet Union signed a second nuclear limitation treaty (SALT II) in 1979. This program was not implemented due to the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan.[15]

As a third point of contention, propaganda and espionage served as key tools used by both the United States and the Soviet Union to attempt to gain a foothold against the other. The U.S. and USSR used propaganda as a means of psychological warfare to win over the hearts and minds of their citizens and call people around the world to support their ideological perspectives.[16] Along with propaganda, both states had large networks of spies coordinated through their central intelligence agencies that sought to bring home military and political secrets.

The Cold War consisted of more than the United States and the Soviet Union going head to head; the rest of the world was also implicated in the process. Countries in the global South sought to assert their own agency throughout this period of history. Some chose to avoid siding with the U.S. or USSR altogether, founding the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1955.[17] The NAM emerged during the wave of decolonization following World War II and sought to give developing countries a platform to advocate for self determination against colonialism and imperialism.

Timeline of Events

The following is a condensed list of essential moments of the Cold War up to this point;[18]

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[12] Mutually Assured Destruction: When Not to Play
[13] Foreign Relations of the United States Series: SALT I, 1969–1972 | Wilson Center
[14] Nuclear Weapons by Country 2023
[15] Jimmy Carter and Leonid Brezhnev sign the SALT-II nuclear treaty - HISTORY
[16] Project Troy: How Scientists Helped Refine Cold War Psychological Warfare
[17] History and Evolution of Non-Aligned Movement
[18] Cold War Timeline - CVCE Website

- **1945**: World War II ends.
- **1948:** The United States pours billions of dollars of aid into Western Europe through the Marshall Plan. Yugoslavia withdraws from the Eastern Bloc by decree of President Josef Broz Tito.
- **1949:** The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is established. The communist People's Republic of China wins the Chinese Civil War; the Republic of China retreats to the island of Taiwan.
- **1950:** The Sino-Soviet Pact is signed between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. The Korean War between North Korea (supported by the USSR and PRC) and South Korea (supported by the US) begins.
- **1953:** Joseph Stalin, President of the Soviet Union, dies. The Korean War ends in a stalemate.
- **1957:** The Soviet Union launches the first ever satellite, Sputnik 1, into space. This marks the beginning of the Space Race.
- **1959:** Nikita Khrushchev, President of the Soviet Union, visits the United States. He is the first Soviet leader to visit the USA.
- **1960:** The friendship between the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union deteriorates.
- **1961:** John F. Kennedy is elected President of the United States. The United States attempts to overthrow Prime Minister Fidel Castro's communist regime in Cuba and fails, strengthening Castro's position. East Germany builds the Berlin Wall, separating both sides of the city. The Soviet Union puts the first man in space.
- **1962:** The Soviet Union positions nuclear missiles on Cuba, only a few miles from the coast of Florida. The United States responds with a naval blockade. For a few weeks, the world is poised to go to nuclear war; this is called the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- **1963:** President John F. Kennedy is assassinated. Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson becomes President in his stead.
- **1964:** Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev becomes the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).
- **1968:** Several states, including the United States and the Soviet Union, sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Brezhnev orders Soviet troops to crush the Prague Spring, a liberal uprising in Czechoslovakia.
- **1969:** Richard Nixon becomes President of the United States. The United States puts the first man on the moon.
- **1972:** The United States and the Soviet Union sign the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, or SALT I. In it, they agree to limit the number of ABM anti-missile missiles, not to manufacture strategic weapons for a period of five years, and not to construct land-based launchers.
- **1973:** The United States signs the Paris Peace Accords, which enables it to pull out of the Vietnam War. A coalition of Arab countries attacks Israel on the high holiday of Yom

Kippur; quickly regains control of the situation and launches successful counter-offensives that push deep into Syria and Egypt.

- **1979:** The United States and the USSR sign the SALT II Agreement, which limits the number of missile launchers and bombers. This agreement has yet to come into force with the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan.
- **1979:** The Soviet Union invades Afghanistan to support the ruling communists against counter-revolutionary guerilla fighters. Margaret Thatcher is elected Prime Minister of the United Kingdom as the leader of the Conservative Party.
- **1981:** Ronald Reagan becomes President of the United States.

Current Landscape

At this point in history, the Cold War has been an ongoing saga that has defined the lives of both governments and civilians for generations. Several wars have been fought, alliances have been made, nuclear weapons have been built, and some progress toward resolution has even been forged. With the second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty signed but not yet enacted, it seems as if the world is beginning to progress toward peace. Even so, this progress is fraught by several challenges.

The first is the re-emergence of conflicts with the potential to grow into large-scale proxy wars. In 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to support the Afghan communist government during a conflict with anti-communist Muslim guerillas. Backed by the United States, these Muslim guerillas, called the mujahideen, have rebelled against the attempted Soviet takeover. The war between the Soviet Union and the American-backed mujahideen had settled into a stalemate. Meanwhile, following years of territorial disputes, Iraq invaded Iran in 1980, leading to the Iran-Iraq War. Iran managed to successfully push back Iraqi forces to pre-war lines and the war sits at a tipping point of ending or regaining momentum.

The second is the election of leaders in key countries who seek to restore Cold War divides. In the United States, President Ronald Reagan has been elected Commander in Chief on a staunch wave of anti-communist sentiment.[19] With Reagan's primary foreign policy goal being American victory in the Cold War, the United States seems poised to re-ignite simmering tensions with the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, in the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher leads the Conservative Party. Much of Thatcher's foreign policy profile has been built on criticizing the Soviet Union for its failure to engage in "genuine detente."[20] This led to the Soviet press giving her the nickname of "the Iron Lady." The United States and the United Kingdom have a Special Relationship, or close alliance between the two nations based on their shared history. Reagan and Thatcher's alignment on foreign policy could lead to a resurgence of antagonistic relations with the USSR.[21]

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[19] [Ronald Reagan | U.S. Department of the Interior](#)
[20] [Thatcher, Margaret | Wilson Center Digital Archive](#)
[21] [History of the U.S.-UK Special Relationship and U.S. Policy](#)

Many countries are facing domestic economic crises, some more significant than others. In the Soviet Union, economic productivity has fallen below economic growth under the country's centralized economy.[22] The USSR faces the question of whether it must adopt Western technology and decentralization programs in order to keep up with the West. The United States is emerging from a recession that has lasted throughout the early 1980s, the worst economic downturn in U.S. history since the Great Depression.[23] The United Kingdom is facing high unemployment and a struggling manufacturing sector.[24] Much of the world is facing a recession spurred by the aftermath of the 1979 Iranian Revolution, which disrupted the global oil supply.[25]

This history shows that Cold War dynamics have evolved and complexified since the initial emergence of the conflict. It is up to Cabinet members to adapt to ever-changing scenarios while considering the relevant historical context and geopolitical positioning.

The Evolution of the International Political Community

The very first Inter-Governmental Organization (IGO) was the Congress of Vienna from 1814 to 1815 to re-establish the territorial borders of Europe after the defeat of French dictator Napoleon Bonaparte.[26] Since then, different governments have been working together in various organizational capacities to form the institutions of the international political community that guide the world in 1982.

The most well-known IGO is the United Nations and all the smaller bodies and committees contained within its reach. The Charter of the United Nations was first ratified on October 24, 1945, in the wake of a devastating Second World War. Now, in 1982, the international political system the United Nations created has expanded to sprawling heights.

The United Nations contains six primary organs[27]:

1. *The General Assembly*, the U.N.'s main deliberative body, composed of all its Member States, each with one vote;

2. *The Security Council* is directly charged with maintaining international peace and security. It is the only U.N. organ capable of passing binding resolutions, composed of 15 states, five of whom possess veto power;

3. *The Economic and Social Council* serves as the policy hub for economic and social issues within the U.N. system;

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[22] [Why the USSR Collapsed Economically](#)
[23] [Recession of 1981–82 | Federal Reserve History](#)
[24] [How record-breaking inflation was tamed in the 1980s | The Week UK](#)
[25] [What Iran's 1979 revolution meant for US and global oil markets](#)
[26] [From the Congress of Vienna to Present-Day International Organizations | United Nations](#)
[27] [UN Structure | United Nations](#).

4. *The Trusteeship Council* provides international supervision for the U.N.'s Trust Territories and primes these Territories for independence;

5. *The International Court of Justice* settles legal disputes between States, give advisory opinions to U.N. bodies, and serves as the U.N.'s principal judiciary organization;

6. *The Secretariat* carries out the U.N.'s day-to-day administrative work.

Alongside its six organs and six standing committees of the General Assembly, the U.N. now encompasses fifteen specialized agencies legislating on issues from meteorology to telecommunications. Subsidiary bodies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Trade Organization have been created to work along the U.N.'s main committees. Post-colonial countries have contributed to a growth in the U.N.'s membership, making the General Assembly a broad forum for smaller countries to have their voices heard. The United Nations has passed an increasing number of treaties on subjects related to disarmament, human rights, and maritime law. All of this growth has increased the scope and influence of the U.N.'s role in the international political community.

It is also important to note that IGOs are not constrained solely to the United Nations. Smaller bodies like the Arab League have emerged as a forum for groups of countries with specific regional or ideological interests to collaborate internally.

Major International Touchpoints – the Falkland Islands

The Special Relationship Between the U.S. and the U.K.

No discussion regarding the United States and the United Kingdom can be complete without acknowledging the Special Relationship between the two states. While the origins of their relationship started out rocky, in the wake of World War II and the emergence of a worldwide ideological conflict they have grown increasingly inseparable. Winston Churchill first coined the phrase in the 1940s,[28] and it has held true from the time of Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt to the current leaders of Prime Minister Thatcher and President Reagan.

The Special Relationship has enabled both states to achieve much in the ways of political, economic, and military gain. Agreements like those of the Quebec Agreement or the US-UK Mutual Defense Agreement promoted the unified work on atomic weaponry and defense,[29][30] the millions of U.S. dollars worth of imports and exports exchanged between each yearly,[31] and their commitments as founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization,[32] all demonstrate the two states' close bonds. The first meeting between Prime Minister Thatcher and President

[28] The Sinews of Peace ('Iron Curtain Speech') - International Churchill Society
[29] Quebec Agreement | The Manhattan Project | Historical Documents
[30] US–UK mutual defence agreement (Washington, 3 July 1958)
[31] Trade in Goods with United Kingdom Available years: 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019
[32] What is NATO?

Reagan perhaps exemplifies the bond between the U.S. and the U.K. the best, as Prime Minister Thatcher assured "Your problems will be our problems, and when you look for friends we shall be there."[33] No interaction with one state will go without notice or potential involvement of the other in some capacity, and their Special Relationship appears all but impenetrable on the surface.

Origins of the Emerging Crisis

The friction between the states of the United Kingdom and Argentina is well known to the United Nations. The United Nations has asked both states to settle this issue as it appears deeply without compromise. The U.K. claims British sovereignty officially over the Falkland Islands and its dependencies, but has been less than enthusiastic about maintaining this standard. Argentina also refuses to cede their claims to sovereignty over the islands, while the people themselves are vocal regarding their refusal to recognize Argentine sovereignty.[34]

An attempt at subtly pushing the inhabitants of the islands toward more favorable views of the Argentinian government was made through the removal of a small freighter ship that would normally supply the islands and instead replacing it with the usage of an Argentinian-provided airlink between the islands and Buenos Aires.[35] This was met with muted success. In 1977 the new military Argentine leadership began to expect dividends from their investments in the Falklands. A lack of returns, the lack of a Spanish speaking majority present on the islands, and a still unreceptive audience to Argentine sovereignty all risked the fate of the Islanders' only link to the mainland. The late 1981 overthrow of Roberto Viola by Leopoldo Galtieri has further exacerbated these concerns as the Argentinian government's demand for returns have only grown.

Current Situation

An unsuccessful visit by the U.K. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Nicholas Ridley attempted to sell the Islanders on the idea of a leaseback scheme to solidify them under Argentine sovereignty. In a speech given to the British House of Commons, Ridley received numerous insults and criticisms from 18 separate Members of Parliament for his attempt at selling the islands to Argentina. However, Ridley has publicly responded with his concerns to one MP regarding a lack of agreement, stating "If we don't do something, they will invade. And there is nothing we could do."[36]

Argentina currently finds itself in economic turmoil and civil unrest, especially as public concerns regarding the military junta leadership that has governed the state since 1976 continue

[33] Anglo-American Relations: Contemporary Perspectives
[34] Painful Choices: A Theory of Foreign Policy Change
[35] An Islander's memories of the 1971 Communications Agreement between the Falkland Islands and Argentina – Penguin News
[36] The Falklands War

to grow.[37] Argentine Admiral Jorge Anaya has long supported the Argentine claim over the islands and now finds himself in a position to act upon these claims. As of now, there also exist members of the Argentine government that believe attempting to mobilize to take the Falklands would increase public support through patriotic fervor, as well as further legitimize the current Argentine government.

Other Actors to Keep in Mind

Other national Cabinets also seek to advance their country's agenda and positioning in the world order:

- Cabinet of the United States, led by President Ronald Reagan
- Cabinet of the United Kingdom, led by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher
- Cabinet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, led by President Leonid Breznhev
- Cabinet of the Islamic State of Iran, led by Ayatollah Khomeini
- Cabinet of the Republic of Iraq, led by President Saddam Hussein

Additionally, the following intergovernmental organizations and national parliaments will be active in real-time decision-making alongside you:

- United Nations General Assembly
- United Nations Security Council
- League of Arab States
- British House of Commons

Final Takeaways

The world is constantly in flux. We are on a tipping point of the Cold War ending or gaining renewed strength. Though the United States and Soviet Union are still considered economic and military superpowers, other countries are looking to assert their agency on an ever-changing global order.

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[37] The global debt crisis of 1982–83 was the product of massive shocks to the

Topic A: The situation between Iraq and Iran

The Origins of the Conflict

<u>The Iranian Revolution, 1979</u>

One of the most prominent turning points in the history of the Middle East took place in 1979 in the form of the Iranian Revolution. During the Iranian Revolution, the Pahlavi dynasty, led by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, was overthrown. The Shah's government was replaced by the rule of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who was previously in exile for 14 years. The Iranian people approved a new constitution, instituting the Islamic Republic of Iran as a theocratic republic.

The Iranian Revolution took place after years of tension between the Shah and Ayatollah Khomeini that culminated in 1978, when a campaign of civil resistance began in earnest on Iranian streets to protest the Shah's rule. Ideologically, the Iranian Revolution was centered on the ideal of Islam (specifically Shia Islam) as the one true liberator of the Third World from oppressive colonialism, neo-colonialism, and capitalism from both the East and the West.

The reason the revolution marked such a drastic change in international politics is that the Shah's secular, authoritarian government was friendlier to the West. In fact, the coup that brought the Pahlavi dynasty into power in 1953 was orchestrated by the United States and the United Kingdom. In contrast, the new Iranian leaders called for the end of American influence in the Middle East. The Iranian Revolution effectively destroyed the American-Iranian alliance, which had previously guided American policy in the region.[38]

Most of the world was unprepared for the upheaval the Iranian Revolution would cause to the global order. The Iran-Iraq War began as a reaction to the Iranian Revolution. Tensions between the two countries had grown throughout the 1970s as they competed for control of the Shatt al-Arab, the waterway formed by the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, the southern end of which forms the border between the two nations.[39]

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[38][The Iranian Revolution and the Iran–Iraq War](#)
[39] [Iran-Iraq War](#)

Disputed Properties

The border dispute over Shatt al-Arab had been recurring between Iran and Iraq since the 1930s. In 1975, the Algiers Agreement was signed between Iraq and Iran in which Iraqi control over the waterway was reduced in exchange for Iran withdrawing their support for a Kurdish insurgency in Northern Iraq. Even so, border skirmishes between the countries continued, as Iraq wished to regain control over the territory it had ceded.

Pathway to War

In 1979, the Iranian Revolution inflamed tensions between Iran and Iraq. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein feared that the Iranian Revolution would turn Iraq's Shia minority population against his Sunni-dominated, officially secular Ba'athist Party, which was sharply in contrast with Iran's new theocratic rule. Iran had long been a pre-eminent power in the Middle East due to its oil wealth and alliance with the United States. Hussein saw the Iranian Revolution as a prime opportunity for Iraq to increase its standing in the region.

At first, it appeared as if Iraq may not invade Iran during its governmental transition. In August 1979, Iraqi authorities invited Medhi Bazargan, the first Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to visit their capital of Baghdad in an attempt to improve bilateral relations.[40] This was disrupted in November that same year by the Iran hostage crisis. The U.S. embassy in Tehran, the capital city of Iran, was taken over by militarized Iranian students who supported the Revolution; Iran took 66 Americans hostage. The Iran hostage crisis did not end until 1981. As a result of the crisis, Bazargan was accused of plotting to overthrow the Islamic Republic of Iran with the help of the Iraqi government.[41]

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[40] Iran-Iraq War Timeline*
[41] Part 1: Iran's Role in Iraq | Wilson Center

Iran and Iraq's relationship further deteriorated in April 1980, when an Iranian militia group called Al-Dawa attempted to assassinate the Iraqi Foreign Minister and Minister of Information and Culture, which was unsuccessful. Iraq responded by rounding up Al-Dawa supporters in Iraq and deporting Iraqi Shia Muslims to Iran. Meanwhile, Iran put its forces on alert, publicly stating this was a response to Iraqi attacks on their oil facilities and the border. Ayatollah Khomeini broadcasted a speech encouraging the Iraqi people to "wake up and topple the corrupt regime in your country before it is too late."[42]

At this point, Iran and Iraq are heading closer and closer to open warfare. Saddam Hussein ordered the leader of Al-Dawa be executed and pulled out of 1975 Algiers Accords. Iran began shelling Iraqi border towns. At the same time, in April of 1980, U.S. President Jimmy Carter prohibited all financial transactions, imports from, and travel to Iran. On April 25, 1980, a covert U.S. operation to rescue the hostages ended in failure. Iranian officials speculated the true cause of this mission was to overthrow the new Islamic regime.

The Iran-Iraq War's First Two Years

The Iran-Iraq War officially commenced on September 22, 1980, when the Iraqi military launched a two-prong invasion against the Islamic Republic of Iran. First was the Southern operation, a 10,000 man force invaded Southern Iran to besiege an air base at Dezful, accompanied by fighter aircrafts to counter any Iranian attacks. This attack largely failed, with Iranian aircraft immediately responding and bombing strategic Iraqi targets. Second was the Northern operation, in which Iraq launched a second front straight into central Iran. This attack captured several hundred kilometers of Iranian territory, destroyed an Iranian oil refinery at Abadan, and sieged the Iranian city of Mehran.

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[42] [AYATOLLAH RUHOLLAH KHOMEINI THE MULLAH WHO TRANSFORMED IRAN - The Washington Post](#)

Iraqi Invasion (1980-81)

The Iraqi invasion continued and in December of 1980 Saddam Hussein declared that the front established by their invasion would become the new military border of the conflict. Hussein also stated that they would not withdraw Iraqi forces until Iran ceded full control of the Shatt al-Arab waterway and accepted self-rule by the ethnically Arab population in Southern Iran (mostly concentrated in a province called *Khuzestan*).

In 1981, the Iranian government had not yet effectively responded to the invasion. Members of Iran's parliament accused Iranian President Bani Sadr of ineffectively responding to the Iraqi invasion. At this point, Iraq and some entities in the international community sought to bring the conflict to a close. In January 1981, a United Nations Special Envoy named Olof Palme visited both Iran and Iraq. By February, both Iran and Iraq had agreed to peace talks with Islamic leaders. Palme set off on a trip to begin peace talks and a high-level Islamic peace mission presented a detailed cease-fire agreement. However, negotiations failed with both sides rejecting the agreement. Iran refused to accept a cease-fire until all Iraqi troops had left their territory.

The fighting continued, ramping up on both sides. By March of 1981, the Iranian government stated that it would not negotiate with Iraq until Saddam Hussein was overthrown. Meanwhile, the tides of the war began to shift. Iran drove back a large Iraqi offensive on the oil-rich city of Abadan and launched an attack on Iraqi forces in Khuzestan. On January 16, 1982, the Washington Post reported that Iran was winning the war.

International Involvement

International involvement in the Iran-Iraq War has been multi-faceted. Regionally, Iran's only major public allies in the conflict are Syria and Libya, while the Iraqi advance is openly financed by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and other Arab states in the region. Internationally, countries outside the Middle East viewed the Iran-Iraq War as a predominately regional conflict. However, this had not stopped them from attempting to take advantage of the situation for their own gain. When Iraq invaded Iran in 1980, the Overseas and Defense

Committee of the British cabinet reportedly held a meeting to discuss how to enter Iraq's lucrative arms market. Though the United States attempted to avoid taking a public stance on the war, they also saw supplying arms to Iraq as a lucrative opportunity. In 1980, the United States began outreach to Italy, seeing Italy as a potential go-between to the Iraqi government.

In January 1981, Saddam Hussein alleged that the United States was supporting Iran by selling them weapons, despite the American embargo on arms sales to Iran. In response to this, the United Nations' Special Envoy Olof Palme began warning of potential superpower involvement in the conflict. That same month, President Ronald Reagan assumed power in the United States and the remaining Iranian hostages were released and returned to America. In April 1981, President Regan's Secretary of State stated in a message to the Iraqi Foreign Minister that he believed Iraq was an important country with influence in the region. Later, American officials met with Iraqi officials in Baghdad. As of this time, the United States had publicly rejected all requests from Iran to purchase weapons.

The United States had not been the only superpower to involve itself in the conflict thus far. Kurdish resistance groups in support of Iraq were found using both American and Soviet weapons in battle. An Iraqi spokesperson would claim that they stopped receiving weapons deliveries from the Soviet Union. Even so, this was proven false as the Washington Post reported that the Soviet Union was still supplying arms to Iraq, just indirectly through its allies in Eastern Europe.

Similar collaboration with Iraq was occuring in Europe. In February 1981, a Lebanese newspaper reported that Iraq had received fighter jets from France, despite France being publicly neutral in the conflict. Later in April, French nuclear scientists arrived in Baghdad to begin research on a nuclear weapon. In March, Italy authorized $1.8 billion dollars in the sale of naval vessels to Iraq. In June, the United Kingdom signed a trade pact with Iraq worth $2 billion dollars.

Despite the flow of weapons sales, there have been many attempts by the international community to bring an end to the Iran-Iraq War. The Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca Peoli traveled to Beirut, Lebanon in 1981, leading an attempt by the non-aligned bloc to conclude the conflict. His visit was followed by visits from the leaders of Libya, Cuba, India, Zambia and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Islamic peace movement attempted twice to begin peace talks between Iran and Iraq; the United Nations attempted no less than five times. The reason for the failures is simple on the surface: Iraq stated that it will end the war if Iran agreed to its new proposed borders. Iran refused.

Beyond the nation-state level, non-state conflicts and ethnic groups further complicate the dynamics of this war.

- **Khuzestan** - Khuzestan is a province in Southern Iran that borders Iraq, situated within the fertile crescent. The Khuzestan province was historically home to the "Susian" people

and is known for its ethnic diversity and historic landmarks. Khuzestan's population is predominantly Shia Muslim, but there are small Christian, Jewish, Sunni and Mandean minorities. Beyond religion, Khuzestan is home to Iran's largest Arab community, known as the Khuzestani Arabs.[43] They primarily reside in the Western half of the province, known as Ahwaz. In 1979, during the Iranian Revolution, a Khuzestan insurgency took place in which the Arab population demanded autonomy. This insurgency included a siege of the Iranian embassy in Kensington, London. However, the uprising was quelled in 1980 by Iranian security forces.

Khuzestan had been a strategic location in the war thus far. The province is home to 80% of Iran's oil reserves and 60% of its gas reserves and is situated on the border near the Shatt al-Arab waterway. Consequently, much of Khuzestan had been captured by Iraq during their invasion; the city of Khorramshahr was captured by Iraqi forces in 1980.[44] The Iraqi government had a vague hope that the Khuzestani uprising would continue into the Iran-Iraq War, making their conquest of the province easier.[45] However, the constant fighting in Khuzestan led to the destruction and impoverishment of many of its inhabitants, with many defending against the Iraqi invasion. The Iranian counteroffensive in Khuzestan had been growing stronger, and it appeared that the Iraqi invaders may not be able to sustain their high casualty rate for much longer.

- **Kurdistan** - The Kurds, or Kurdish people, are an Iranian ethnic group native to the mountainous region of Kurdistan, which spans Northern Iraq, Northwestern Iran, Southeastern Turkey, and Northern Syria.[46] After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War II, Western states promised the Kurdish people their own independent state. This promise was later reneged in the Treaty of Lausanne, making the Kurds a minority in every new country created in the region.[47]

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[43] The Iran-Iraq War
[44] https://www.rferl.org/a/iran-khuzestan-poverty-separatism-bloody-war-memories/29515269.html
[45] Karsh, Efraim *The Iran-Iraq War 1980–1988*, London: Osprey, (2002): page 27.
[46] The Kurdish population
[47] The Treaty of Lausanne

The Kurdish nationalist movement continued throughout the 20th century. More than 20 million Kurds still lived across Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Syria; their struggle for their own nation was opposed by these nations and the Kurdish people were used as pawns in regional politics.[48] Shortly after the onset of the Iran-Iraq War, the Iraqi government attempted to curry favor from the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) as potential leverage in its war effort.[49] In 1981, Saddam Hussein's regime established its first major weapons supply route to the KDPI near the Iranian cities of Nowdesheh and Qasr-e Shirin. The Iraqi government hoped to conquer Nowdesheh to use the highway connecting Baghdad and Tehran. Meanwhile the Kurdish people hoped to establish "Kurdish Liberated Zones" within Iran. However, the Iranian army had launched a series of destructive attacks against the Iraqi Kurds, limiting their military efficacy in the war.

Past International Action

As of 1982, the Iran-Iraq War threw the Middle East region into turmoil for two years. Although the region has always been particularly contested, on September 4, 1980, Iran began shelling Iraqi border towns using long-range artillery fire. Iraq considered this the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War. The UNSC quickly took preventative measures regarding the conflict, first with an attempt to maintain international peace and commence a ceasefire.

Attempts by the United Nations to seek an end to the war dated back to 1980, when an outbreak of armed conflict between Iran and Iraq prompted Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim to offer his good offices to work for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. On September 23, 1980, in accordance with Article 99 of the United Nations Charter, he brought to the attention of the Security Council the threat to the maintenance of international peace and security. In resolution 479, the Council called upon Iran and Iraq to refrain immediately from any further use of force and to settle their dispute by peaceful means. It had little effect, and on 11 November of 1980, Mr. Olof Palme, former Prime Minister of Sweden, was appointed as the Secretary-General's Special Representative to Iran and Iraq.

Possible Solutions

As it stands, neither side of the conflict is interested in a ceasefire, even with the requests of the Secretary-General. The UNSC favors the United States as the broker of peace in this conflict, but concerns are raised regarding the United States' influences in Iran and are cautious to fully engage since recently exiting the Iranian Hostage situation. In addition, Hussein has escalated tensions in the region due to "[...] Iran [allegedly] getting American arms and spare parts from private markets despite the U.S. embargo." Meanwhile, U.N. Special Envoy Olof Palme warns of potential superpower involvement in what has been, up until this point, a strictly regional conflict. (1) Some alternatives to the United States that have been proposed include Italy and the

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[48] The Kurds' Story | The Survival Of Saddam | FRONTLINE | PBS
[49] The Kurdish Factor in Iran-Iraq Relations | Middle East Institute

Netherlands, primarily for their lack of involvement in partisan issues in the region. With thousands of pre-existing civilian casualties, instability in the Middle East, and potential for international warfare, tensions between Iran and Iraq may also bleed into other conflicts that are pressing in the Middle East, such as in Afghanistan and Syria. It is urgent that the United Nations Security Council does not ignore the situation at hand, and take immediate action regarding the Iran-Iraq War.

Questions to Consider

- When does international influence to de-escalate violence become a violation of sovereignty?
- Do powerful countries have an obligation to be involved in conflicts beyond their borders?
- What implications does the conflict have for politics and economics at the international scale?
- With this context in mind, what should be the Security Council's approach to the Iran-Iraq War?

Further Reading

- [How the Iran-Iraq war will shape the region for decades to come](#)
- [The Iran-Iraq War: The View From Baghdad | Wilson Center](#)
- [Iran-Iraq War Timeline*](#)
- [UNITED NATIONS IRAN-IRAQ MILITARY OBSERVER GROUP (UNIIMOG) - Background (Full text)](#)
- [Iran-Iraq War | Causes, Summary, Casualties, & Facts | Britannica](#)
- [The Arab/Muslim World: Iran-Iraq War](#)
- [1982 United Nations Security Council election](#)
- [United Nations Iran–Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG)](#)

Topic B: The situation in Afghanistan

Executive Summary

In 1979 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to install a more friendly regime and solidify a faltering ally on its southern border. The Mujahideen, a collection of Muslim rebels, rose up against the invasion, and fighting consumed the country. The General Assembly and the UNHCR have acted, but the Security Council has yet to do so. The invasion has resulted in numerous civilian deaths and an enormous refugee crisis, and the future remains uncertain.

Background Information

Origins of the Conflict

The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan on December 24, 1979. The reasons for the invasion are multi-pronged. First, Afghanistan held a location of strategic importance to the Soviet Union. Back during Tsarist Russia, Great Britain fought multiple wars to maintain its control over Afghanistan in order to prevent Russia from accessing the Indian border. As British imperial and military power declined post World Wars, the Soviet Union offered military and economic aid to neutral Afghanistan in order to develop a friendly relationship with the country. Afghan leadership, however, was not responsive to the Soviet's advances.[50]

In 1973, Afghanistan's last king was ousted in a coup by his cousin, Mohammed Daoud Khan, who established a new autocratic government. The Soviets initially welcomed this shift, believing Afghanistan to be moving closer to the left. Although Daoud was more nationalist than socialist, his rise to power was dependent on pro-Soviet military and political factions.[51] A third of Afghanistan's active troops had trained in the Soviet Union and Daoud was supported by a

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[50] Why the Soviet Union Invaded Afghanistan - HISTORY
[51] The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S. Response, 1978–1980

faction of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), the Parchamists, led by Babrak Karmal.

Daoud's reign was rife with tension. Disappointing the Soviets, the authoritarian Prime Minister Daoud Khan refused to let Afghanistan become a Soviet puppet state, stating "Afghanistan shall remain poor, if necessary, but free in its acts and decisions" to Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev. Daoud hoped that moving away from the Soviet influence and toward the United States would help decrease the radical elements of his government and military. This would prove a failure. He never earned the support of the Khalq faction of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, while also never effectively governing Afghanistan's many tribal leaders.

Five years after he came to power, Afghanistan President Daoud was overthrown and murdered in a coup led by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan's Khalq faction, led by Noor Taraki.[52] During the coup, soldiers from Taraki's faction assaulted the Presidential palace and executive Daoud. In the days following the coup, Taraki became the Prime Minister. In December 1978, Afghanistan signed a 20-year "friendship treaty" with the Soviet Union which increased the amount of Soviet aid flowing into the country.

Even Soviet assistance, however, could not stabilize Taraki's government. Taraki's Deputy Prime Minister, Hafizullah Amin, received word in 1979 that the Parcham faction was leading a plot to overthrow his regime. In response, Amin took the opportunity to purge and execute many Parchamists and consolidate his own power. Additionally, Taraki's government attempted to incite a Communist revolution in Afghanistan's tribal areas, which led to armed revolt throughout the country. The Soviet Union feared that Taraki could not effectively govern Afghanistan, even if he was friendly to them. Soviet leaders were further concerned an Islamic government would take power if Taraki were to be overthrown.

In September 1979, Soviet officials sent a delegation to Kabul to assess the situation and shore up Taraki's regime. The political chaos in Afghanistan did not calm; forces close to Hafizullah Amin, Taraki's Deputy Prime Minister, executed Taraki. Islamic insurrections continued. On December 24, 1979, the Soviet Union decided to take full control itself. The invasion began with the murder of now-Prime Minister Hafizullah Amin and the installation of Babrak Karmal as the Soviet's puppet head of government. Soviets sent in ground forces from the north in an attempt to conquer Afghanistan.[53]

Current Situation

The Soviet Union faced more resistance than expected in their attempt to take control of Afghanistan. Outside of their strongholds, Soviet troops faced fierce resistance from the local peoples. Resistance fighters, called mujahidin, saw the Soviets controlling Afghanistan as a defilement of Islam as well as of their traditional culture. The mujahidin employed guerilla

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[52] Afghan president is overthrown and murdered - HISTORY
[53] Soviet Union Invades Afghanistan - HISTORY

tactics against the Soviets, attacking quickly and retreating into the mountains, using whatever weapons they could find. These guerilla troops enjoyed a natural advantage over their invaders, as they knew the territory and also had local strongholds of support. Soviet troops, on the other hand, did not know the territory, constantly faced surprise attacks, and were not welcomed by local populations. Consequently, the invasion was miserable for Soviet soldiers, most of whom were unprepared for the endeavor.

In addition, the Soviet Union's invasion was opposed by the United States, both publicly and through arms sales to the mujahidin. In the years following the Soviet Union's invasion, Afghanistan quickly became a Cold War battlefield. The United States responded harshly to the invasion, freezing arms talks, cutting wheat sales, and even boycotting the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow. American opposition to the Soviet's invasion only increased when Ronald Reagan became U.S. President in 1981. The United States provided arms and other assistance to what Reagan referred to as the "freedom fighters" in Afghanistan. For the Soviets, the intervention has drained both Soviet finances and manpower. In the United States, commentators labeled the invasion of Afghanistan "Russia's Vietnam."

Furthermore, in early 1980, violent demonstrations broke out against Karmal and the Soviet invasion. The United States continued their campaign of arming the insurgency, and with that support the mujahideen went from a collection of insurgents to a more organized force against the Soviet military and the USSR-backed Afghan army. Afghan refugees began to flee to Iran and Pakistan.[54] Karmal failed to gain popular support and soon the fighting settled into a stalemate. The Soviet military controlled urban areas while the mujahideen controlled the countryside. This conflict has claimed many lives of combatants, but also countless civilian lives. Between civilian deaths and the refugee crisis, this conflict is as much a humanitarian crisis as it is a military conflict.

Past International Action

In 1980, the Security Council considered two resolutions on this topic. The first demanded Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. It was defeated with a veto from the Soviet Union as well as votes against from non-permanent members. The second, Resolution 462, called for an emergency session of the General Assembly to consider the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The General Assembly voted to demand Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan by a vote of 104-18. The General Assembly, in emergency sessions, has the power to make recommendations to its members about measures they can use to enforce their resolution. As a result, many members imposed sanctions and embargoes on the USSR.[55] However, it is not expected that members will engage in direct military conflict.[56] The United States also led a boycott of the 1980 Moscow

[54] A Historical Timeline of Afghanistan | PBS NewsHour
[55] The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S. Response, 1978–1980.
[56] Overwhelming U.N. Vote Condemns Soviets - The Washington Post

Olympics.[57] Neither the Olympics boycott nor the economic measures have shown any success in shifting the attitudes of Soviet leadership. In addition to action from the GA, UNSC, and economic sanctions, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees established a permanent office in Pakistan in 1980 to help manage the massive influx of refugees from Afghanistan.[58]

Possible Solutions

Despite resolutions that advocated for intervention coming to a vote in other conflicts, because of the veto power the Security Council generally does not intervene. Due to the veto power, any substantive action at the Security Council level will need to garner some level of support from the Soviet Union. Any proposal in this body will at least need an abstention from the Soviet Union to pass. Korea only had UNSC action because of the Soviet boycott, which is unlikely to be a factor in this situation.[59] Between previous failed attempts at negotiation in this conflict and the track record of failed negotiations in other conflicts, any negotiated solution will need a bold and innovative approach to have a chance of passing.

The humanitarian crisis that has begun because of the conflict is also a fraught discussion. The vast majority of the refugees have fled to the bordering states of Pakistan and Iran. Refugees in the Cold War have been treated as pawns to destabilize rivals, which is a dangerous risk in a major conflict zone.[60] In addition to their utilization as political leverage, refugees are fleeing states that are then demanding their repatriation. Pakistan is receiving aid from the UNHCR but very few states would be capable of handling millions of people coming across their border all at once. More resources are always helpful to improve living conditions for refugees, but their political predicament is not as easily helped.

Bloc Positions

The situation in Afghanistan is one that is familiar to the Cold War. Two superpowers are using their proxies to accomplish their geopolitical aims and one of those superpowers, in this case the Soviet Union, has become directly involved militarily. The Soviet Union and its allies seek another strong ally in its neighbor to the south. The United States and their allies seek an ally on their rival's border and to destabilize the Soviets with this conflict. The Non-Aligned Movement, many of whom are developing states and former colonies, often look out for the people in these conflicts. They also seek multilateral approaches to solve situations like this and seek to avoid the binary nature of Great Power conflict altogether.

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[57] The Olympic Boycott, 1980
[58] UNHCR - Afghan refugees in Pakistan during the 1980s: Cold War politics and registration practice, Rüdiger Schöch
[59] United Nations Command > History > 1950-1953: Korean War (Active Conflict)
[60] UNHCR - Afghan refugees in Pakistan during the 1980s: Cold War politics and registration practice, Rüdiger Schöch

Questions to Consider

- Where does your state fall in the battle lines of the Cold War?
- Are there facets of this situation that may make it more open to diplomacy than others?
- What has caused other conflicts like this to end?
- How have refugees crises like these been handled in the past?

Further Reading

- Timeline of modern Afghan history: A Historical Timeline of Afghanistan | PBS NewsHour
- History.com's summary of the conflict: Why the Soviet Union Invaded Afghanistan - HISTORY
- UNHCR's research paper on the refugee crisis: UNHCR - Afghan refugees in Pakistan during the 1980s: Cold War politics and registration practice, Rüdiger Schöch

Topic C: Ensuring the peaceful use of outer space

Executive Summary

The United Nations responded quickly to the advent of space exploration by forming its own bodies and treaties to govern the uses of outer space. While much of this work has proven to be fruitful, the subject is still plagued by ambiguity and disagreement. The potential for both prosperity and disaster from the use of outer space is evident. It is the job of the United Nations Security Council this year to resolve the current issues and allow for the continued use of outer space.

Background Information

Humanity began its exploration of outer space on October 4, 1957, when the USSR launched Sputnik into orbit.[61] It is no accident that this happened as the Cold War was starting ramping up. The Cold War is "cold" because the U.S. and Russia do not engage in direct conflict, but rather are at odds through proxies; the realm of outer space has become one of the most symbolically important proxies in this war.[62]

The gap in technological capabilities between the USSR and U.S. grew as the former launched Sputnik II on November 3 of 1957, carrying the first living creature to outer space, a dog named Laika. This was in the face of two failed rocket attempts by the U.S. before they finally succeeded in launching the Explorer satellite on January 31, 1958. The Explorer satellite carried a Geiger counter that, along with future experiments, would prove the existence of the Van Allen radiation belts surrounding the Earth. In October of the same year, the U.S. would consolidate their Space Race efforts into the newly formed NASA.

Yet the Soviets would beat the United States once again to the next milestone, successfully sending cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin into space, completing the first manned mission beyond our planet. Three weeks later, the U.S. sent Alan Shepard into space, though on a suborbital trajectory, as opposed to Gagarin's mission, which was able to complete one full orbit around the Earth. U.S. President John F. Kennedy would follow this mission up with the declaration that the U.S. would put man on the moon before the close of the decade.

In 1961, the U.S. launched Project Gemini, meant to prepare NASA for its eventual manned missions to the lunar surface. While the Soviets had the first manmade object impact the moon in 1959 with their Luna 2, the U.S. would ultimately claim the title of first man on the moon, with the 1969 Apollo 11 mission. During the 1960s, the U.S. also launched probes to Mercury, Venus,

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[61] [National Geographic] The History of Space Exploration
[62] [History] The Space Race

and Mars, focusing more on scientific endeavors, while the Soviets focused on landmark milestones to further this new Space Age.

The previous decade saw the advent of space stations, in the USSR's Soviet Salyut 1 (1971) and the US's NASA Skylab (1973), marking the next step in space exploration. With Project Apollo coming to an end in 1972, recent space exploration has been focused on low-Earth orbit.

The exploration of outer space is an issue of military supremacy due to the numerous ways in which outer space can be used for military purposes. Both the U.S. and the USSR have used reconnaissance satellites to take more accurate photos of each others' military installations than were possible before.[63] This first began with the U.S.'s CORONA[64] and the USSR's Zenit[65] satellites. The gravity of this new surveillance threat quickly became apparent to both superpowers, and both sides began developing anti-satellite weapons around the same time in the late 1950s to either disable or destroy the opposition's satellites.[66][67] Additionally intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) also required an understanding of rocketry and outer space, as these weapons utilize sub-orbital spaceflight.[68] ICBMs specifically pose a large threat to the international community as they are capable of carrying nuclear payloads.[69]
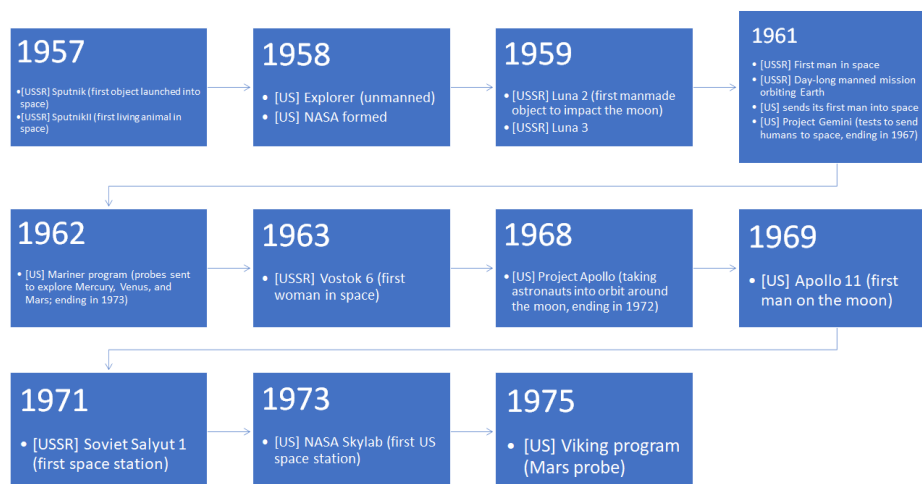

Figure 1: *Timeline of the Space Race.[70,71]*

[63] Erickson, Mark. *Into the Unknown Together. the DOD, NASA, and Early Spaceflight*. Air Univ Press Maxwell Afb Al, 2005.
[64] Corona: America's First Satellite Program
[65] McDonald, Robert A. *Corona between the Sun and the Earth: The First NRO Reconnaissance Eye in Space*. ASPRS.
[66] WS-199
[67] Peebles, Curtis. *The Corona Project: America's First Spy Satellites*. Naval Institute Press, 1997.
[68] [Encyclopedia Astronautica] R-7
[69] [Century of Flight] History of the Atlas Rocket
[70] [NASA] Skylab
[71] [NASA] Viking 1 & 2

Past International Action

The potential threat originating from outer space as a staging ground for weapons and surveillance, among other things, quickly became apparent to the United Nations after the initial launch of Sputnik in 1957. On December 13, 1958, the U.N. General Assembly (UNGA) created an ad hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) to address such issues. This committee was originally composed of 18 member nations tasked with reporting to the UNGA on the peaceful uses of outer space as it pertained to the United Nations and other international bodies.[72] The following year, the committee would be made a permanent body of the UNGA and have its membership increased from 18 to 24.[73]

Rising tensions quickly became apparent in the years after COPUOS was formed. The international community became increasingly concerned with the potential militarization of outer space, but due to rising tensions between the U.S. and USSR, COPUOS would not be able to meet for a few years until 1962, only after UNGA Resolution 1721 dictated that the committee convene. COPUOS's two subcommittees met at this time to discuss issues scientific, technical, and legal in nature. While the discussions resulted in agreement in terms of scientific and legal issues, the subcommittees were ultimately unable to come to a suitable resolution on its legal questions.[74]

Resolution 1721 also furthered the United Nations' commitment to the peaceful use of outer space by reaffirming the duties of COPUOS. This resolution clarified that the U.N. Charter and subsequent international law applied to outer space as well as to Earth. COPUOS was then tasked with reporting legal problems arising from space exploration to the UNGA for arbitration.[75]

Resolution 1721 further directed U.N. member nationals to inform COPUOS of any launches into outer space to be recorded on a public registry kept by the United Nations. COPUOS was also to act as a consortium, keeping in close contact with both governmental and non-governmental organizations relating to the exploration or use of outer space. This resolution also gave COPUOS the authority and responsibility to work with both the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and submit relevant reports to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UNGA.[76] This made COPUOS the first international body acting in the role of ensuring that the use of outer space by world governments would remain peaceful in nature.[77]

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[72] [UNGA] RES 1348
[73] [UNGA] RES 1472
[74] [American Journal of International Law] "Outer Space Co-Operation in the United Nations"
[75] [UNGA] RES 1721
[76] [Permanent Mission of France] UNOOSA and COPUOS
[77] COPUOS History

To aid COPUOS in their work, the United Nations also established the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), which serves as the secretariat for COPUOS and its subcommittees.[78] UNOOSA is also responsible for any documents relating to COPUOS or its subcommittees.[79]

COPUOS is also responsible for overseeing the five United Nations treaties and agreements passed thus far relating to the use of outer space.[80] The first of such agreements was the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, or Outer Space Treaty, passed on January 21, 1967, which forms the basis of international space law.[81] This treaty was originally prompted by the advent of ICBMs.[82] Among the Outer Space Treaty's provisions were the prohibition of nuclear weapons in space, the prohibition of military uses of celestial bodies, an affirmation that outer space remain open to the free exploration and use by all nations, and the prohibition of any nation from claiming sovereignty over any celestial bodies or outer space in its entirety. One key distinction is that while the Outer Space Treaty limits the use of outer space to peaceful purposes, it does not in its text prohibit all military activities in space, including the establishment of military forces or weapons platforms in outer space. The treaty does, however, prohibit the establishment of military bases, the testing of weapons, and the use of outer space for military exercises.[83]

The second such agreement was the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space, or the Rescue Agreement, passed on December 19, 1967 through UNGA Resolution 2345. This agreement elaborates on Article V of the Outer Space Treaty in the rescue and safe return of astronauts from space.[84] It has, however, been criticized for being vague on multiple fronts, including defining who and what are entitled to rescue and the burden of cost for rescue efforts.[85]

The third agreement governed by COPUOS is the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects, or the Space Liability Convention. Similar to the Rescue Agreement, the Space Liability Convention expands upon the Outer Space Treaty, specifically its provisions on liability. The Convention states that member nations ultimately bear responsibility

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[78] [UNOOSA] History
[79] [UNOOSA] Past Sessions of the Committee and its Subcommittees
[80] [UNOOSA] Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
[81] [UNODA] Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies
[82] [US DoS] Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies
[83] [The Space Review] Space Force and international space law
[84] [UNGA] RES 2345
[85] [American Bar Association] The Recovery and Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space: A Legal Analysis and Interpretation

for any spacecraft launched from within their territories.[86] As of today, there has only been one claim made through the Convention.[87]

The Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space, also known as the Registration Convention, was signed on November 12, 1974.[88] This convention further expanded on the Outer Space Treaty by requiring U.N. member nations to provide the United Nations with details on the orbital path of all space objects launched from within their territories, including the launching state, space object designation number, date and location of launch, orbital parameters, and general function of the space object.[89]

The most recent treaty with regards to the use of outer space is the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, also known as the Moon Treaty or Moon Agreement, which was signed on December 18, 1979. This treaty furthers the provisions of the Outer Space Treaty by surrendering the jurisdiction of all celestial bodies to the signatories of the Treaty, thus subjecting them to international law.[90] However, as the treaty has not currently been ratified by any countries engaging in human space exploration, it can be said to hold little legal weight.[91]

Possible Solutions

Since its inception, the overwhelming majority of resolutions passed by the United Nations have been adopted through consensus or a large majority vote.[92] It is because of this precedent that we should believe such a solution is also possible with regards to ensuring the peaceful uses of outer space. In fact, this pattern has already been observed as it pertains to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.[93]

As mentioned before, COPUOS has increased its membership since it was established as a permanent body in 1959. Today, it stands at 53 members, almost three times its original size.[94] This growth demonstrates first, that there is growing interest within the international community in ensuring the peaceful use of outer space, and second, that many U.N. member nations are eager to participate directly in this endeavor.[95]

At present, there still remains much disagreement over the legal questions pertaining to the peaceful use of outer space. One cause is that the term "peaceful uses of outer space" itself lacks

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[86] [UN] Convention on the international liability for damaged caused by space objects
[87] [NNSA] Operation Morning Light
[88] [UNGA] RES 3235
[89] [UNOOSA] Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space
[90] [UNTC] Agreement governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies
[91] [Legal Desire] MOON AGREEMENT, 1979
[92] United Nations Decision-Making: Confrontation or Consensus?
[93] Consensus Decisionmaking by the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
[94] [UNOOSA] https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/copuos/members/evolution.html
[95] The United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: Past Accomplishments and Future Challenges

a meaningful definition.[96] One can look to the 1967 Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America as precedent for the term "peaceful" meaning non-military.[97] However, by the time the Outer Space Treaty (OST) was signed, the U.S. and USSR had all but committed to using outer space for military purposes, including surveillance satellites and ICBMs. It is thus important for this body to discuss how the United Nations might define and use this term moving forward.

Furthermore, rather than outlining what constitutes military uses of outer space, another approach would be to define what constitutes the peaceful use of outer space. As stated before, the potential for scientific advancements through the use of outer space are evident. As COPUOS also interfaces with the WMO and the ITU, it may be beneficial to examine those relationships and determine the nature and purported benefits of such interactions.[98]

The UNSC should further elaborate upon the delineation between airspace and outer space. While the purview of the United Nations may be shared across the two, outer space poses a potential route for confusion and conflict being a relatively new frontier to the human species.[99]

The use of outer space also shares similarities with the use of nuclear technology. So called dual-use technologies are those that can be used for both civilian and military applications.[100] While the potential for scientific advancement through the use of outer space is undeniable, the lines become blurred when such advancements are achieved through means that cannot be neatly defined as either civilian or military in nature. An apt comparison can be made between outer space and the high seas. As such, the Convention on the High Seas may prove to be a useful analogue for discussion regarding the use of outer space.[101] The new Convention of the Law of the Sea currently being worked on may also prove useful in providing an updated framework in discussing the use of a shared region of our natural world.[102]

Lastly, the issue of space debris is currently a burgeoning topic of discussion among scholars. From a results-oriented perspective, it may be useful for the body to also consider the end ramifications of the use of outer space, peaceful or otherwise, and how that might impact the global citizenry.[103]

Bloc Positions

The current consensus in the international community, as evidenced by the creation of and work since COPUOS, is that outer space ought to be reserved for peaceful use and not for military

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[96] Jasani, Bhupendra. *Peaceful and Non-Peaceful Uses of Space: Problems of Definition for the Prevention of an Arms Race*. Routledge, 2021.
[97] [OPANAL] The prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America
[98] [Interdisciploinary Science Reviews] Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
[99] The Legal Status of Outer Space and Relevant Issues: Delimitation of Outer Space and Definition of Peaceful Use
[100] [European Commission] Exporting dual-use items
[101] Convention on the High Seas
[102] The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
[103] [Space Policy] On strengthening the role of COPUOS: Maintaining outer space for peaceful uses☆

use.[104] However, it is still undeniable that the main players in current space exploration, namely the United States and the Soviet Union, have sought to explore the military uses of outer space from the onset of the Space Age.

The U.S. has explored several military uses of outer space through its programs including the Nike-Zeus Program, Project Defender, the Sentinel Program, and the Safeguard Program.[105,106] The Soviet Union has also explored similar uses through its Fractional Orbital Bombardment System (FOBS)[107] and its Polyus orbital weapons system.[108]

At present, the focus of defining the peaceful use of outer space has been limited practically to that of celestial bodies, but excludes outer space as a whole. One need only look to the aforementioned military programs to see that outer space is, indeed, currently being used for military purposes outside of the territory of celestial bodies.[109]

It is impossible to frame the current debate on the use of outer space outside of the context of those on either side of the Iron Curtain. Both sides have begun a slow process of cooperation, evidenced by the 1972 Apollo-Soyuz Test Project (ASTP). However, it is clear that the realm of outer space remains an area of interest for both sides agnostic of the apparent cooperation.[110]

Questions to Consider

1. Should the United Nations continue with its efforts to limit outer space to peaceful uses?
2. How do we define the "peaceful use of outer space"?
3. What precedents or analogues outside the realm of outer space can we look to for comparison?
4. Which states bear responsibility for the uses of outer space?
5. How much responsibility should states bear for the uses of outer space?
6. Are the current treaties and agreements surrounding the use of outer space effective?
7. What is the role of sovereign nations in ensuring the peaceful use of outer space?
8. What is the role of the international community in ensuring the peaceful use of outer space?

Further Reading

1. [National Geographic] The History of Space Exploration
2. [History] The Space Race
3. COPUOS History

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[104] The Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: Soviet Views
[105] [NYT] 'STAR WARS' TRACED TO EISENHOWER ERA
[106] [James Madison University] EMP: A Brief Tutorial
[107] Quest Volume 7, Number 4
[108] "Звездные войны", которых не было
[109] [U.S. Naval War College] Properly Speaking, Only Celestial Bodies Have Been Reserved for Use Exclusively for Peaceful (Non-Military) Purposes, but Not Outer Void Space
[110] Samuels, Richard J. *Encyclopedia of United States National Security*. SAGE, 2006.

4. Corona: America's First Satellite Program
5. [American Journal of International Law] "Outer Space Co-Operation in the United Nations"