



# SMH-MUN III

Saturday, March 21, 2015

## United Nations Security Council Background Guide

Revolution: Demanding Progress or Endorsing Chaos?

**NOTE: The same background guide will be used in UNSC-A(Double) & UNSC-B(Single).**

### Topic 1: Preventing radicalism in Iraq and Syria, specifically with the group ISIS

#### I. Introduction

In the past year, it has been almost impossible to turn on the news and avoid some coverage of the continuous turmoil that religious radicalism has engendered within the nations of the Middle East. The rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has reshaped global policy and presented unique challenges that desperately require the attention of world leaders. This group of militants has spread across large sections of both Syria and Iraq, shamelessly slaughtering innocents and promulgating fear in its quest for complete dominance over the region. Although it originated in the Iraqi branch of the al Qaeda terrorist organization, ISIS has since grown into an even more potent threat: its membership has swelled to an estimated 30,000 fighters (a number that includes the 1000+ westerners that have traveled to Syria to join the extremist group) and its brutal persecution of minority groups is one of the most shocking in modern history. Only you, the delegates of the Security Council, have the power to forge a coalition strong enough to shatter the death grip has on the Middle East and abate the suffering of millions of Iraqi and Syrian citizens. Lives depend on your ability to collaborate, compromise, and create a solution to this pressing problem. We wish you the best of luck.

#### II. History of the Problem

- a. October 2006: Al Qaeda leader Abu Ayyub al-Masri announces the creation of Islamic State in Iraq (ISI), and establishes Abu Omar al-Baghdadi as its leader.
- b. April 2013: Islamic State in Iraq declares its absorption of an al Qaeda-backed militant group in Syria, Jabhat al-Nusra, also known as the al-Nusra Front, wh. Al-Baghdadi says that his group will now be known as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS/ISIL). Al-Nusra Front leaders reject the merger sparking violence between the two groups.
- c. February 3, 2014 - Al Qaeda renounces ties to ISIS after months of infighting between al-Nusra Front and ISIS.
- d. June 10-11 2014: ISIS takes control of Mosul and Tikrit, two major Iraqi cities near Baghdad.
- e. June 30, 2014 - The United Nations announces that an estimated 1.2 million Iraqis have been forced from their homes.
- f. July 2014 - In Syria, all the cities between Deir Ezzor city and the Iraq border have fallen to ISIS, including control of Syrian oil field al-Omar, which can produce 75,000 barrels of oil per day.
- g. August 8, 2014: U.S. President Barack Obama authorizes targeted airstrikes to protect U.S. personnel from ISIS.
- h. August-November 2014: ISIS releases videos depicting the beheadings of Americans James Foley, Steven Sotloff, and Peter Kassig along with British aid workers David Haines and Alan Henning.



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- i. September 11, 2014 - The CIA announces that the number of people fighting for ISIS may be more than three times the previous estimates, with new estimates projecting that ISIS has between 20,000 and 31,500 troops across Iraq and Syria.

**\*\*Delegate Tip: Research more dates and statistics, as this is by no means a complete recounting of the event.**

### III. Consequences and Events

The spread of ISIS and its increasing regional control of the Middle East pose a threat to global security. Many western nations have tightened security measures at airports in fear of another terrorist attack on the scale of the attacks in the United States by Al Qaeda on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Throughout its spread ISIS has also committed countless war crimes, including slaughtering and raping entire villages along its path, and U.N. Independent International Commission on Syria has concluded that the leaders of ISIS should be tried for war crimes and crimes against humanity. While the United States and other nations have begun air strikes at ISIS bases in Iraq and Syria, many western nations have been hesitant to dedicate any ground troops to the region.

**\*\*Delegate Tip: There are several potential consequences to these events; feel free to explore your own opinions.**

### IV. Past UNSC Action

- a. Spurred on by the attacks of 9/11, the Security Council established a counter-terrorism committee in which member states would try to actively prevent terrorist attacks, work together to stop terrorism, and criminalize terrorist action as well.
- b. The most major Security Council action after the establishment of this committee has been Resolution 1624, which condemns all terrorist actions and calls upon member states of the counter-terrorism committee to deny safe haven from anyone committing terrorist attacks.
- c. More detailed information as to more specific UN Security Council information and past action can be found at these links:

### V. Possible Solutions

- Impose trade embargoes on the borders of ISIS territories to cut off their supply of money that keeps the organization running
- Attack the group militarily, sending in UN troops to hot zones to assist Kurds and Free Syrian rebels in their most dire areas of need
- Provide monetary compensation to nations that choose to provide troops and other military resources in the fight against ISIS



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- Invest heavily in anti-extremist allies in the region who can combat radicalist ideologies face-to-face
- Coordinated awareness efforts to counteract ISIS' propaganda movement in developed nations, where ISIS continues to gain recruits

#### VI. Helpful Links

Intro to ISIS: <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/fullpage/isis-trail-terror-isis-threat-us-25053190>  
<http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-terror/pope-francis-christmas-message-condemns-isis-brutal-persecution-n274711>

Diplomatic Solutions to the ISIS Problem: <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/09/15/does-the-us-have-allies-it-needs-to-fight-isis/a-military-campaign-alone-is-not-the-solution-to-isis>

Past UNSC Action:  
<http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/securitycouncil.shtml>  
<http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/sc-res.shtml>