

The Doon School Model United Nations  
Conference 2019

## Background Guide

# Special Political and Decolonization Committee





DSMUN '19

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[chair.specpol@doonschool.com](mailto:chair.specpol@doonschool.com)[www.dsmun.in](http://www.dsmun.in)**Secretary General's Address**

Dear delegates,

As the Secretary General, It is my honour and privilege to welcome you all to the 13th Doon School Model United Nations Conference. DSMUN has been growing exponentially and actively augmenting the level and intensity of crises, debate and co-operation with each passing year. It is a legacy that we hope to continue and reinforce with this year's conference.

In an ever volatile, dynamic and adaptive international status-quo, it becomes increasingly vital for us as students- and thereby potential actors in the same system of compromise- to deliberate, discuss and formulate the groundwork of bi-lateral and multi-lateral ties that are to be established in the future.

With firm precedence, it would not be wrong to say that delegates, having attended this conference in the past, have developed a deeper and a more empirical understanding of diplomacy, compromise and conflict. While the Viceroy's Executive Council strives to ensure the peaceful transfer of power from the British to the Indian Union in 1946, the NATO contemplates the feasibility of occupying Antarctica. From condemning theocracies to enforcing climate laws, DSMUN will be an invigorating amalgamation of resolving and debating dissidence, dispute and disparity.

Besides whiling away my time watching typical Netflix Rom-coms, I find myself engrossed in reading about the framework and history of international and national politics. I am in- charge of the historical and political society and the editor of various publications in school. Having participated in various MUNs in India and abroad, I have had the opportunity to serve DSMUN in various capacities, and subsequently feel privileged to be given the opportunity to be at the organisational apex of the conference this year.

I eagerly await your presence at Chandbagh.

Warm regards,

Vikram Jain



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[chair.specpol@doonschool.com](mailto:chair.specpol@doonschool.com)[www.dsmun.in](http://www.dsmun.in)**President's Address**

Greetings!

As the President of the Doon School Model United Nations Society, it gives me immense pleasure to invite you to the 13th Session of the Doon School Model United Nations Conference. Being at the pinnacle of a conference that finds itself amidst the top ranks in the country, both in terms of global outreach and quality, has been an absolute honour. However, we at Doon constantly strive to outdo ourselves and promise that this edition of DSMUN will outdo all of its predecessors be it in terms of organizational skill, quality of debate or participation not just from the South Asian region but from around the world. It is with this vision in mind that I extend my heartiest welcome to each one of you to this year's conference.

The scope of this year's DSMUN will not remain confined to conventional committees. Keeping this in mind, we have expanded DSMUN's committee choices incorporating some bold and new ideas. With the introduction of highly challenging committees such as Lincoln's War Cabinet (1864), Viceroy's Executive Council (1946), Union Council of Ministers (1984) and the Rajya Sabha, we aim to pull off a conference not limited to one's imagination. This year's committees are aimed at developing informative deliberations and solutions to issues: both of global and national significance. Discussions pertaining to context of historical events allows one to explore the multitude of possibilities and find answers to the fundamental question of 'what if'. Having said so, the essential Model UN committees still remain intact providing an interesting challenge in terms of debate, wit and diplomacy to one and all.

As for myself, I am currently surviving the ISC curriculum and hold a keen interest in Politics and History. I deeply enjoy playing sports be it athletics or football. If not on the sports field, you can probably catch me commenting on Tottenham Hotspurs bleak chances of clinching a trophy. I also serve as the School Captain of the Doon School and the Editor-in-Chief of the Yearbook, one of the school's flagship publications.

Looking forward to seeing you all in August.

Warm Regards,

Nandil B. Sarma

## Introduction to the committee

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee is a constituent of the United Nations General Assembly. It used to be the most integral of General Assemblies but has turned slightly redundant after the end of the colonial era. In current times, the committee aims to foster global peace by the aims of looking at arms, ammunitions and potential conflicts in regions. It spends most of its time dealing with the Middle East. Thus, at DSMUN '19 we wish to do away with this generic notion of what SPECPOL is and aim to instead look at different geo-political conditions that exist in our world and solve them through the process of debate, alliances and mutual understanding.

The issue of Self-Determination of peoples, is at quite a rise in this day and age. Due to rapid technological advancements, more and more people have the will to stand up and fight for their sovereignty and nationality. Thus, the SPECPOL will bring in global political contexts for this issue and aim to create a framework that could work for all instances of self-determination movements.

Looking into the Ukraine, makes the SPECPOL more diverse. Such an agenda will test delegate's ability to negotiate and broker terms in a real life situation. It allows the SPECPOL to broaden its horizon and to look at other geo-political scenarios rather than the common Middle East Problem.

We wish all delegates the best, and hope they have an enriching experience in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee!



# DSMUN '19

## **Agenda 1**

The Issue of Self-Determination of Peoples

## Overview

All peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. Self-determination holds two aspects - internal and external. Internal self-determination gives the right to the people of a state, to govern them without any kind of external interference. On the other hand, external self-determination, is the right of people to remain free from any kind of foreign domination in their homeland, it is to be able to determine their own political status. The international law specifying the right of self-determination was recognized in the 1960s, which supported the colonial territories to gain full independence or achieve any other status of their choice. However, it excluded all the ethnic or other smaller groups existing in those colonies as they were not given any right to express self-determination and form a separate state or territory thereby separating themselves from the “people”.

## Historical Context

One of the first proponents of the right to self-determination was US president Woodrow Wilson, followed by the likes of Lenin and many others and later becoming a major factor in the construction of Europe's economy in the past. However, most of his attempts to convert self-determination into a fully functional norm were in vain as this right wasn't given official recognition by the League of Nations. They had to repent their decision of not recognizing self-

determination as a part of the international law as later the very question of self-determination became the cause of multiple civil wars, each with increasing the magnitude of violence and death. Following this, the League of Nations took steps and set up two analysis groups of international experts. Their aim was to analyze and examine the principle of self-determination; for instance, in the case of Åland Islands, a culturally and linguistically Swedish territory. This territory wished to separate itself from the new Finnish state; it gained its independence from the Russian Empire in December 1917 and wished to be reunited to its cultural motherland, Sweden.

The League of Nations denied these islands a right to join Sweden based on the diplomatic efforts made by the Finnish government using tact and securing the support of major world players like Japan, Germany, France, and even Russia.

The military skirmish on the Åland Islands and the lack of support for the Finnish Government by the Swedish Social Democrats were viewed as hostile between the two neighbors and led to further reinstatement of Åland inhabitants the right to join with Sweden and separate from Finland. Finland proved their claim over the same through the geographical assurance of continuing archipelagos joining with Finland, and Åland being a part of them.

Furthermore, the fact that these islands were completely separated from the land of Sweden by the deep sea waters and had no geographical or territorial



continuance with Sweden acted as a major barrier from uniting the islands with Sweden. When posed with the question of cultural and linguistic assimilation with Sweden, the Finnish government allowed the people “wide-reaching cultural and linguistic autonomy” in 1920.

The first body of experts clearly believed that the principle of self-determination of people holds pivotal importance in the new political beliefs, especially due to the occurrence of the Great War, yet it failed to get any recognition in the convent of League of Nations. Due to this, the experts denied self-determination from being recognized as a law.

The second group of experts drew a similar conclusion on the question of establishing self-determination as an internationally acclaimed law. They recognized the principle of justice and liberty that founded the same, however, rose objections to the vague and widely open-ended interpretation of the same which could be used to twist motives and cover international actions of intervention in a more altruistic and benevolent fashioning the cause of National Self-Determination.

As time progressed, decolonization progressed too and with time, the obscurity of self-determination was no more. It slowly transformed from the “principle” of self-determination to the “right” to self-determination and also found itself embodied in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations. The

principle of self-determination was also put into the 1941 Atlantic Charter.

## **Article 1 of the UN Charter**

### **Article 1**

i) All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of the right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

ii) All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic cooperation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.

iii) The States Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the administration of Self-Governing and Trust Territories, shall promote the realization of the right of self-determination, and shall respect that right, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

This particular change was noticed to take place between the years of the 1960s and 1970s. This was also the same time during which the number of colonies becoming independent saw an upsurge. This was due to the adoption of the first text regarding the Declaration on Granting Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples ("Declaration on Colonial Independence") by the United Nations General Assembly in 1960. The main prospect of the Declaration on Colonial Independence was to bring all kinds of Colonialism and its manifestations to a precipitous and unconditional end. It stated that all peoples have the right to self-determination, according to which they had all the right to determine their political status, pursue their economic, social, and cultural development, without any interruption from any dominating power. This straightforwardly stripped any and every state of their domination or practice of any such domination over other states or peoples. It also stated that "inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness" should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence. The realization of the declaration also aims for the promotion of friendly relations and co-operation among States.

Paragraph 6 of the declaration sets forth another fundamental principle, without which one almost never finds a UN reference to self-determination: "Any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations." The final paragraph reiterates "the sovereign rights of all peoples and their territorial integrity."

Although there has been no statement defining the "peoples", and neither of its purposes also states that its motive is to grant every group of ethnically distinct people with a state of their own, the resolution reaffirms that self-determination may be achieved through any of the following:

1. Independence

2. Free association

3. Integration

Or the emergence into any other political status freely determined by the people.

The principle of territorial and political unity and integrity would be superior to that of self-determination, since "nothing in the foregoing paragraphs" was to be construed to authorize or encourage any



"action" which would damage this principle in any way possible.

However, it is clearly stated that this restriction will only be applicable for those states, which are ready to agree to the principle of equal rights and self-determination of its peoples. As described in the article, it also required the peoples to have a government on behalf of the "whole peoples" belonging to the community which prefers to be separated.

This government also needs to be free of any biases such as race, creed or color.

However, it also does not mean that the only government, which can be deemed as a representative, is the one, which "specifically" chooses to recognize all the variations (ethnic, religious, linguistic, or any other differences between other communities of the state). A better and more persuasive interpretation would consist of what was the concern of most of the United Nations members at the time, when the declaration was adopted in 1970, that a state was not to be considered to be a representative if it formally failed to include a particular group from participation in the political process, based on that group's race, creed, or color. A typical example at the time was that of the apartheid South

Africa, which stayed a major concern for

all internationally, until the mid-1980s when the transition to the majority rule took place.

The mere fact that a democratic, non-discriminatory voting system results in the domination of political life by an ethnic majority in a particular state does not necessarily mean that the state is unrepresentative within the terms of the Declaration on Friendly Relations.

Although it may violate subsequent norms of minority rights that have been proclaimed, beginning in the 1990s for example, the Indo-Pakistan war which led to the independence of Bangladesh broke out only two months after the adoption of the Declaration on Friendly Relations, but the vast majority of UN members did not consider that Pakistan's treatment of East Pakistan/Bangladesh fell within the proscriptions of the cited paragraph; thus, Bangladesh was deemed not to have a right to self-determination as it was defined in the Friendly Relations Declaration.

The principle of territorial integrity or political unity would seem to be superior to that of self-determination, since "nothing in the foregoing paragraphs" shall be construed to authorize or encourage "any action" which would impair this principle.

## In Addition to Case Provision

### 1. Kurdistan:

Self-determination of the Kurdish people has been one of the longest issues of self-determination. The Kurds are considered to be the fourth largest ethnic group in region with a population ranging roughly between 25 million to 30 million.

The Kurds (mainly Northern Iraq) have successfully formed a partly recognized region. The government running this region is known as the Kurdistan Regional Government or KRG in short.

The strain on the relationship of the KRG and the Iraqi government hiked in 2014 due to conflict on issues such as funding for development, sale of oil and some other territorial disputes.

The tensions further increased when the Kurds of Iraq were denied independence even after a referendum held in September, which saw 93% voters voting in favor of independence. This was followed by an upsurge in the Kurdish nationalist movement. The Kurdish community has faced oppression for years, be it banning of the Kurdish language or the use of chemical weapons on the Kurdish community by Saddam Hussein.

### 2. Aaland Islands:

Using this newly-articulated principle, in 1920, the Swedish-speaking people of the Åland Islands, an archipelago of about 300 small islands that had been incorporated into the recently-created state of Finland, insisted on holding a plebiscite in order to express their will as to whether they wished to separate from Finland in order to unite with Sweden.

The Ålanders' claim was ultimately resolved by a committee of jurists within the League of Nations, which determined that the Ålanders did not have a right to separate from Finland because "the separation of a minority from the State of which it forms a part . . . can only be considered as an altogether exceptional solution, a last resort when the State lacks either the will or the power to enact and apply just and effective guarantees."

### 3. Catalonia:

Another semi-autonomous region is the region of Catalonia, which is officially included in the region of Spain.

This region has faced numerous political crises in the past 40 years due to its drive for independence that was suspended by Madrid after a failed bid to break away.

This region is one with great economic stability and not only do they have their

own language but the peoples of this area have also come up with a parliament, national flag and anthem. This region is also completely stable in terms of the internal forces like the police forces and also the government provided services are partly under the control of the Catalanian peoples.

The main reason as to why the peoples of Catalonia want a separate recognition as a country is because of the exploitation of their resources and wealth to suffice the poorer parts of Spain. This results in a decrease in the pace at which development is taking place in Catalonia.

Therefore, as measures to stop the drive for independence by the Catalonians, a referendum was held on 1<sup>st</sup> October. However, the voting saw a mere 43% turnout as the Spanish national police prevented people from casting their votes.

It was followed by the self-declaration of independence by the ruling separatists in

the Catalan parliament which made the Spanish government sacked the leaders and dissolve the parliament of Catalonia under their new article 155. It stated that any and every autonomous community must face and fulfill its duty towards the Spanish state or would be stripped and deprived of any kind of power it holds.

### **Conclusion**

No right to secession has yet been recognized under international law.

However, it is possible that, if a distinct group of people are systematically denied the right to participate in the government of the state or if individuals within such a group suffer systematic and gross violations of human rights that make their participation in that state impossible. As of now, Catalonia and Kurdistan are not recognised by the United Nations as countries.

# DSMUN '19

## **Agenda 2**

The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine

## Introduction

The temporarily occupied and uncontrolled territories of Ukraine are areas such as the Crimean peninsula and parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, which have been taken over by Russian military intervention.

Though, Ukraine has been an independent nation since 1991, Russia has continued to expand its area of interest into its territory. Events trace back to the collapse of the Soviet Union after which both nations retained very close ties, but at the same time continued to face conflicting areas of interests:

Ukraine's significant nuclear arsenal was quite a prominent one. Despite this, the issue was resolved as Ukraine agreed to abandon the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances. However, it was only possible if Russia (and the other signatories) would completely maintain peaceful relations and not pose any threats to the political and territorial freedom to Ukraine. In another eminent issue, there was a division of the Black Sea Fleet in which Ukraine agreed to leave Sevastopol port allowing the Russian Black Sea fleet to continue working there. While Russia was engaged in numerous gas disputes with Ukraine throughout the 1900s and the 2000s, it also became a part of the GUAM Organization for democracy and Economic Development. This was perceived as a direct threat to CIS, which was a Russian controlled trade group. In

2010, Viktor Yanukovich was elected as the president of Ukraine and was thought to be of pro-Russian belief; this belief seemed to be an opportunity for Russia to mend their relations with Ukraine. As Ukraine had not renewed the lease of the Naval base, it was a call for direct action for Russia to remove its troops from the region. However, Yanukovich not only renewed the lease, but also expanded the troop presence by allowing them to use the Kerch peninsula for training. In Ukraine, it was highly disregarded, and this extension was as an unconstitutional act. This was followed by events in September 2013 when Russia warned Ukraine against a planned agreement on free trade with the EU and threatened them that it might result in a financial collapse. In response, Russia continued its pre-existing import restrictions on Ukrainian products and suggested other actions such as separatist movements in the Russian-dominated eastern and southern Ukraine. Though it seemed contrary to international law, Russia stated that if Ukraine signed the trade agreement they will consider the bilateral treaty to be invalid, which would question Ukraine's present status as a state and thus, could possibly intervene and take charge of Ukrainian land.

A while later, in February 2014, the Euromaidan movement took place which consisted several protests causing the removal of the government of Viktor Yanukovich. After a series of protests,

the Ukrainian parliament decided to vote to restore the 2004 Constitution of Ukraine and importantly remove Yanukovich from power. Although the official motion for impeachment resulted in a 328-0 against Yanukovich, he refused to resign because of the absence of 10 votes to fulfill the three-quarters requirements, as leaders from eastern and southern regions were loyal to him. While this was happening, the Berkut, a special Ukrainian police unit from Crimea and other regions of Ukraine seized areas on the Isthmus of Perekop and Chonar peninsula to have control over all land traffic between the mainland and Crimea.

Through this background guide we intend to provide you some insights to specific regions and understand the level of unrest there

### **Crimea:**

The situation in Crimea has been ever. Firstly, in 2014, after the Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich fled the capital, armed men opposed the Euromaidan rebels and started gaining control over the Crimean Peninsula. At that time it was being identified as the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and an independently administered port city of Sevastopol. After the occupation of Crimea, these unmarked troops identified to be Russian special forces declared Crimea a territory occupied by Russia. Then on August 8th, 2016 Ukraine reported that Russia had increased its

military presence on the Crimea demarcation line. Two days later, Russia claimed to have killed two and injure ten servicemen in clashes with Ukrainian commandos in Armyansk (Crimea) on August 7 - these incidents were denied by Ukraine. Parallel to this, a Ukrainian official claimed that a number of Russian soldiers had deserted but not entered Ukraine. This confrontation broke out into a conflict between the Russian officers and border guards. The Russian president claimed these incidents to be "practice of terrorism" while the Ukrainian president called the Russian part to be "equally cynical and insane".

Interim Ukrainian President Oleksandr Turchynov considered this incident to be quite serious and accused Russia of "provoking a conflict" by seizing the Crimean parliament buildings and eventually taking control over the regions. He related Russia's military actions to the 2008 Russo-Georgian War when Russian backed administrations established control over parts of the Republic of Georgia. He called on Putin to extract Russian troops from Crimea and clearly expressed his concern that Ukraine will "preserve its territory" and warned by saying that "military intervention would be the beginning of the war and the end of any relations between Ukraine and Russia."



**Belarus:**

For decades Ukraine has been involved in this conflict and continues to face this problem of choosing between EU and Russia. Ukraine has been close to Russia because of their economic and political relations while having the choice of joining of the EU.

Ukraine reported in 2014 that Belarus continued to provide a base to many Russian units which were seen to participate in military exercises around the Ukrainian north western border in the Volyn region and posed a direct threat to Ukraine's territorial integrity.

Several other nations expressed grave concerns over Russia's actions and accused it of breaking international conduct and violating Ukrainian sovereignty. In addition to this many nations imposed economic sanctions against Russia and its individuals and companies. After the UN Security Council Special Meeting held on March 1, 2014, on the aforementioned crisis, all G7 nations urged Russia to withdraw the troops from Belarus.

This intervention caused a drastic impact on the financial markets and caused a global fall in the financial market due to the threat of instability. The Russian ruble hit its lowest point against the US dollar and Euro and the market fell by almost 10 percent. The Russian central bank rose interest rates to stabilize the

currency. Due to unstable market and other economic problems such as inflation becoming prominent, the prices of wheat and grain rose and Ukraine turned out to be a major exporter in wheat.

**Donbass:**

The conflicted region in the Donbass region of Ukraine has been a region of conflict since March 2014 due to the presence of pro-Russian and anti-government campaigns and mindset. The regions of Donetsk and Luhansk, commonly known as "Donbass", were already under tensions and were attacked by a large group of pre-Russian protesters who were prominent across southern and eastern Ukraine. This eventually led to an armed conflict between Russian back forces in these regions and the Ukrainian government. Events in 2014, which include mass activity of military forces, were considered to be an 'annexation' of the region. They were co-related to the region of Crimea, where pro-Russian militants had established rule. This conflict is often referred to as a 'war', because of its high profile and usage of many automatic weapons and other required professional military equipment.

These series of events were termed as "international armed conflict". The Amnesty International laid charges on Ukrainian military for being responsible for these acts of violence and asked both nations to maintain peace and security.

The NATO pointed out and condemned a major international law violation by Russia; Russia had sent a truck convoy to Ukraine without its consent. The European Union took a heavy stance and threatened Russia to harshen the already imposed sanctions on the nations. The United States stood firmly against these acts and especially against Russia for committing such crimes.

### Possible Solutions

The Delegates are expected to discuss the current situations and then reach to a possible solution to this crisis. Some of the possible solutions could include the following:

**Holding a plebiscite-** By a plebiscite, the popular wish of the residents of the affected areas can be known and actions can be taken accordingly. This will provide the citizens of these regions to choose whether to join Ukraine or Russia. This allows organisations such as the United Nations to be aware of the choice or interests of these citizens and help them move in their direction. However, a plebiscite will inform these organisations of the interests of the majority and not of the each and every individual. Plebiscites have been held earlier in countries such as Australia regarding the introduction of conscriptions in 1916.

**Territorial division-** Both nations can claim certain regions to be their parts and can be made official by UN mediation. The area can be divided but it is important to keep some factors in mind such as nations fighting for a more economically beneficial land such as with

fertile agriculture soil or with rich mineral deposits. This division based on equity would help restore power and establishment in the region.

**Proper investigation-** After carrying out a proper investigation of the region and finding out the root cause for the crisis, the UN can decide the nation to be held responsible for this matter and then provide the other nation with all right over the region. Usually these procedures are carried out by SPECPOL and later reported to the UNGA for further discussions.

Throughout the sessions of the committee, we expect you to include such actions to reach a constructive solution.

### References

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