Background Guide

CISAMUN

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AMRITSAR-MODEL UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations Security Council

ABOUT CISAMUN

We, at CISA, proudly present the launch of the CISAMUN, a venture into the world of Model United Nation. We are just eight years old but we have the precision of winning awards at every MUN we have participated in. And we thought that if we have it then we ought to share it. The sprawling seven acres and the state of the art infrastructure in the charmed city of the Golden Temple, provides us the perfect backdrop to host some of the best schools for an interactive session on global issues.

In these last years, we have we have moved on from infancy to maturity. Our main achievements being a 1700 strong student brigade and their guardians as our shareholders, a committed team of teaching and non teaching staff and a management with a vision.

Young minds have the freshest ideas. Keeping this in mind, CISAMUN wishes to tap this pool of ideas and contribute to issues that matter, in whatever little way possible. United Nations: as the name suggests, thinks globally and that is exactly what we strive for too. Issues ranging from environment concerns and religious intolerance to terrorism and trade have an impact on all, hence the urgency to start young.

We proudly launch the CISAMUN scheduled for the 3rd, 4th and 5th of August 2017.

A LETTER FROM
THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the first session of the Cambridge International School Amritsar Model United Nations Conference. I am Vansh Aggarwal and I am thrilled to be your Secretary General at CISAMUN '17. Before I go on to the specifics about the conference, I'll start by introducing myself. I am a pass-out from The Doon School, Dehradun. I have been an avid MUNer and have attended and chaired conferences both nationally and internationally. As such, my interests lie mainly in the field of Economics and Politics. I am going to pursue a degree in economics and psychology from the University of Chicago this fall.

As far as the conference goes, I hope you are all as excited as I am to take part in these incredibly unique simulations this year. Each committee will have the opportunity to explore a new dimension of its topics, ranging from the ongoing Syrian civil war to the militarization of the Arctic. Simultaneously, the International Press Core will help make sure that delegates are questioned and made accountable for their actions and decisions.I encourage you to embrace the important role you each will play, as your country's voice is crucial.

I hope these realistic yet challenging simulation will test the intellectual and diplomatic capability of every delegate. I expect all delegates to be 'aware' of the developments in current affairs and be familiar with their foreign policy. Further, I expect everyone to maintain a high level of debate and the committee to adopt a holistic approach towards the agendas. Also, ones ability to lobby and lead blocs will be highly judged upon, as diplomacy forms the core of any Model United Nations Conference. So be prepared for three days of intense debate, heated arguments, lobbying and above all, meeting new people and making friends.

I look forward to seeing all of you here at the holy city this fall.

Vansh Aggarwal

Secretary General

Dhruv Kharbanda
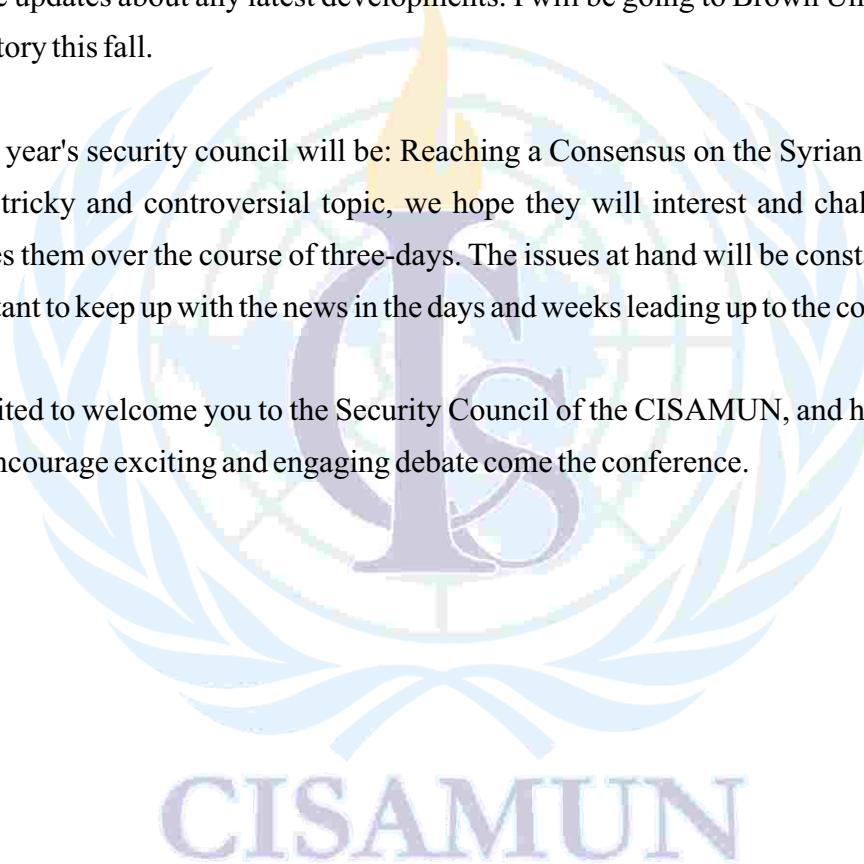
Chairperson

A LETTER FROM
THE CHAIRPERSON

Dear Delegates,

Greetings, Delegates! My name is Dhruv Kharbanda and it is my privilege to serve as the Chairperson of the Security Council at CISAMUN 2017.

Before moving into the intricacies of committee, I'd like to tell you a bit about myself: I'm a pass out from the Doon School, Dehradun. My main interests lie in Economics and History. Outside of academics, I frequently participate in debates, quizzes and MUNs. Most importantly, I am passionate about current affairs and like to be updates about any latest developments. I will be going to Brown University to pursue Economics and History this fall.

The agenda for this year's security council will be: Reaching a Consensus on the Syrian Civil War. Being currently relevant, tricky and controversial topic, we hope they will interest and challenge you as the committee navigates them over the course of three-days. The issues at hand will be constantly developing, and it will be important to keep up with the news in the days and weeks leading up to the conference.

I am incredibly excited to welcome you to the Security Council of the CISAMUN, and hope the Council's unique properties encourage exciting and engaging debate come the conference.

Vansh Aggarwal

Secretary General

Dhruv Kharbanda

Chairperson

The United Nations Security Council

Agenda: Reaching a Consensus on the Syrian Crisis

The Security Council[1]

Under the Charter, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 Members, and each Member has one vote. Under the Charter, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions.

The Security Council takes the lead in determining the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression. It calls upon the parties to a dispute to settle it by peaceful means and recommends methods of adjustment or terms of settlement. In some cases, the Security Council can resort to imposing sanctions or even authorize the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security.

The Security Council also recommends to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and the admission of new Members to the United Nations. And, together with the General Assembly, it elects the judges of the International Court of Justice.

Introduction

Of the political crises facing the Arab World today, the Syrian Civil War is the most destructive and far-reaching. The conflict started as a result of pro- revolutionary demonstrations known as the Arab Spring, which has shaken the entrenched political systems of the Middle East and North Africa since early 2011[2]. Syria, which began experiencing pro-democracy protests and calls for reformation around the same time, has turned into failed state with no national government. The conflict's core, the military engagements between those forces in favor of and those against the administration of President Bashar al-Assad, does not limit the ongoing crisis to political instability. The civil war affects the Arab World in its entirety, because of its very real effects that radiate today in and around Greater Syria. Some of these include serious refugee overpopulation, economic stress resulting from the Syrian collapse, and the prevalence of extremism in the region.

Despite efforts from the United Nations (UN), the Arab League, special diplomatic representatives, and joint Russo-American led multilateral peace talks; the conflict's various sides are no closer to ceasing military operations nor to beginning the rebuilding process. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that, as of January 2014, there are approximately 2.5 million refugees of the Syrian Crisis[3]. Accompanying the refugee crisis that threatens to exhaust the resources of surrounding Arab states, insurgency and militancy have become commonplace in Syria. Al Qaeda-affiliated groups, especially the militant Islamist terrorist group Jabhat al-Nusra, threaten the region's stability.

In addressing the multitude of subtopics and complexities surrounding the Syrian Civil War, the League of Arab States has, in the past, issued unified statements and even attempted limited action. Its efforts have, however, been met with failure on all fronts.

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[1]"Security Council." United Nations. United Nations, n.d. Web. 21 June 2017. http://www.un.org/en/sc/.
[2]MervatRishmawi, "The League of Arab States in the Wake of the 'Arab Spring,'" Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, September 2013, http://www.cihrs.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Arab-Leage.pdf.
[3]"UNHCR Global Appeal 2014-2015 Syrian Arab Republic," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, last modified 1 December 2013, accessed 25 June 2014, http://www.unhcr.org/528a0a2d15.html.

History and Description of the Issue

The Arab Spring and the Arab League

The wave of popular demonstration and political changes known as the Arab Spring was instrumental in bringing about the Syrian Civil War, just as it has sparked other outbreaks and aftershocks across the Middle East and Africa. It began as peaceful protests but escalated into calls for governmental reform, movements in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and Yemen[4]. The Arab Spring has proven completely unpredictable, and following the initial wave of protests Syria was suddenly drawn into the movement.

For this committee, it is important to understand the recent history of these pro-democracy demonstrations and what action, if any, the League of Arab States has taken in response. When addressing each of the Middle East and North Africa crises of the Arab Spring, League's member states classified each emergency categorically. There were two categorizations: revolutions that called for the push towards governmental transitions and revolutions that spurred controversial responses among member states and very little action.

Revolutions in a state like Libya were met with active calls for the government's peaceful transition because few LAS governments found an ally in Libya's Gadhafi. In contrast, uprisings in powerful "linchpin" states like Egypt would be met with a less decisive stance from the League, with most LAS members calling for observation rather than action. Whichever of the two categories a revolution might fall under, one constant throughout the Arab Spring is the League's absolute refusal to condone any kind of foreign military intervention on Arab soil[5]. Hence in this conflict, national sovereignty is encouraged, however the regime is not necessarily supported.

The LAS has reacted, as stated previously, in two major ways to the latest pro-democracy demonstrations in the Middle East and North Africa. Syria fits in the category of active involvement, as was the case with Libya, rather than in the second category of detached policy statements, as was the case with Egypt. By ignoring the revolutions in Egypt, the League sent a message that long-standing reputations did not necessarily equate to protection by the Arab bloc. This is evident in the fact that the league made no effort to examine any acts of violence or human rights violations in the region.

On the other hand, Libya's major uprising of February 2011, which culminated in the capture and execution of the government's political leaders eight months later (including its *de facto* ruler, Muammar Gadhafi), was met with immediate action from the League. Libya was swiftly suspended as a member of the LAS; however, the League condemned the possibility of foreign intervention to solve the conflict. This resulted in the endorsement of internal revolutionary movements by the LAS as the preferred means of ending the conflict.

In a further measure taken by the League, one that would provide a precedent to future action taken against the Assad regime in relation to the Syrian conflict, the National Transitional Council (NTC) of Libya was instituted as the country's new Arab League representative in February 2011[6]. The administration recognized by the LAS as a country's representative must have political clout but is at the discretion of the majority of the League Council's members. Thus, the NTC was granted increased legitimization and afforded a head start as a new governing body. The way in which the LAS addressed the Libyan uprising is worth noting, as it would later influence the League Council's mitigations in Syria.

International response to the Arab Spring has varied with western democracies encouraging pro-democracy uprisings. As it has become more apparent that the regime changes brought about by the Arab Spring do not necessarily foster stable Middle Eastern democracies, Western views have shifted towards the negative. At this time the Arab League desires more sovereignty for states experiencing Arab Spring uprisings to allow for domestic resolution of the issues there[7].

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[4] MervatRishmawi, "The League of Arab States in the Wake of the 'Arab Spring,'"
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, September 2013, http://www.cihrs.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Arab-Leage.pdf.
[5] Ibid.
[6] League of Arab States Council Resolution 7370, Extraordinary Session, 27 August 2011.
[7] "The Middle East at Crossroads," American Foreign Policy Interests, last modified 9 August 2013, accessed 25 June 2014, http://www .tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/10803920.2013.819732.

State Fracture and International Diplomatic Efforts

The roots of Syria's eventual degradation and fractionalization into contested zones of control began with the Assad government's repression of popular protests in early 2011. Following the ignition of region-wide pro-democracy protests, similar uprisings in Syria demanded an increase in freedoms and democratic organizations from the government. While the objective of these protests remained largely stable and peaceful in nature, the face of the uprising changed radically when Assad-aligned security forces began violently repressing and attacking protesters[8]. A report compiled by the United Nation Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in September 2011 found that the Assad government was guilty of multiple human rights violations, including widespread attacks on non-combatants, stating that, "the Syrian Arab Republic has grossly violated the non-derogable right to life.[9]" While the list of violations continues, the most important factor drawn from the UNHRC report is that the government used indiscriminant force against civilians on a number of occasions, fueling the protests that would soon turn violent and divide Syria into factionalized zones of influence.

In October of that year, the LAS proposed a cease fire between Assad and the rebels, contingent on the Syrian government's release of political prisoners and opening of free media. By November, lack of cooperation by the Assad regime resulted in the first tangible action by the LAS in the Syrian Crisis. The Arab League imposed various sanctions against the Assad regime[10]. The Arab states not only isolated the Assad regime but also started supporting opposing parties. This led to the initial uprising being declared as a civil war.

By December 2011, a month after the sanctions were imposed, the conflict evolved into a full-scale revolution. With the death toll exceeding 4,000 by that time a conservative estimate the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was comfortable classifying the situation as a civil war, noting the extent to which political stability had dissolved[11]. In addressing the Syrian crisis, the League deployed an observer mission to Syria, beginning in late December 2011 and continuing until a review of the mission a month later, to supervise a potential ceasefire. Resolution 7444, proposed by the Arab League, recognized the right of both the Syrian federal government and the opposition parties to exist and negotiate to form a coalition government, but rejected the right of Bashar al-Assad himself to rule[12]. The opposition parties are the rebel groups that would later form the Syrian National Coalition.

Instead of curbing violence between the government and rebel groups, the Arab League observers had little effect. For the most part, Syria's opposition parties, working to oust President Assad from office, accused the observer mission of lacking a strong mandate, leading to an inability to enforce a ceasefire[13]. The other side of the conflict did not appear much better: while the Assad administration praised the presence of the Arab League mission, the international consensus was that he was using the League's presence to buy time and establish legitimacy while working to oust the rebels[14].

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[8]MervatRishmawi, "The League of Arab States in the Wake of the 'Arab Spring,'" *Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies,* September 2013, http://www.cihrs.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Arab-Leage.pdf.

[9]A/HRC/18/53, "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation on human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic," 15 September 2011.

[10]League of Arab States Council Resolution 7442, "Following Developments of the Situation in Syria," 27 November 2011.

[11]*Ibid.*

[12]*Ibid.*

[13]Arab League suspends Syria mission Nabil el-Arabi," *BBC News*, last modified 28 January 2012, accessed 25 June 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-16774171.

[14]*Ibid.*

After this most Arab states withdrew their donated troops to the mission due to increase in violence and lack of progress. Any further action lacked the consensus of member states and this marked the end of the first phase of the peacemaking process.

Following this attempt, the United Nations General Assembly drafted a resolution urging both sides to negotiate a coalition government and condemning violence. This was ratified by almost all member nations and was to be conducted under the Arab League and a UN Representative[15]. The international initiative, although implicating both parties in the perpetration of violence, identified the Syrian government as the primary party needing to stop the hostility and was nearly unanimously passed[16]. Notable dissentions included China, Russia, and Iran, three states that, despite opposition from the international community, continue to support the Assad regime in some regard[17]. As the conflict's momentum grew and its scope expanded into its second year, it took on qualities associated with an international political disaster, including the involvement of foreign organizations.

Major Campaigns and Internationalization of Conflict

By March 2012, Representative Kofi Anan began his peace plan in Syria. He hoped to initiate ceasefire and bring all parties to the table for a negotiation. The process of proceeding as anticipated till the violence escalated and the ceasefire was broken. A complete lack of progress led the UN to brand the Annan peace plan a failure by May of that year, with the fighting between the government and its opponents only increasing. This major international failure illustrated the dangers of attempting to implement a ceasefire in the middle of conflict. Furthermore, it helps emphasize the current power of Syria's growing momentum, precipitating the need for more creative solutions.

With the lack of credibility and effectiveness of multiple peace plans in Syria as of mid-2012, and due to the stagnant and entrenched nature of combat between the multiple sides of the conflict, military movement began to deescalate[18]. This eventually led to the internationalization of the conflict, with outside parties interfering in various capacities. One significant entity that has emerged in Syria as a result of the chaos created in the wake of the civil war is Jabhat al-Nusra (JN), also known as the al-Nusra Front: the Syrian branch of al Qaeda[19]. As an extension of the larger terrorist network al Qaeda, Jabhat al-Nusra represents a security threat birthed directly from the conflict, as it has become a major political power controlling several Syrian municipalities and has a stated mission of international jihad[20].

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[15]A/RES/66/253, "The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic," 16 February 2012.
[16]Ibid.
[17]Voting Record for A/RES/66/253, United Nations Bibliography Information System, 16 February 2012.
[18]"Syrian Civil War," Encyclopedia Britannica, last modified 16 January 2014, accessed 25 June 2014,
 http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1781371/Syrian-Civil-War.
[19]Ibid.
[20]NomanBenotman and Roisin Blake, "Jabhat al-Nusra: A Strategic Briefing," Quilliam Foundation,
 http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/jabhat-al-nusra-a-strategic-
 briefing.pdf.

The UN, and especially its Western member states, began to identify Jabhat al-Nusra as a terrorist organization affiliated with al Qaeda in early 2013, and the Security Council took steps to add the group to its al Qaeda sanctions list in May of that year[21]. JN now represents only one of the multiple groups that formed as a result of the Syrian conflict, albeit the one most directly affiliated with organizations widely classified as terrorist in nature. This adds a new and greater concern for the international community. It raises questions regarding the extent Syria can tolerate further fracturing before it breaks entirely. Additionally, the LAS must constantly reconsider which factions are "good" or "bad" when even more moderate ones support the efforts of extremists like the al-Nusra Front.

In addition to those factions directly associated with al Qaeda, by late 2012 Syria saw an influx of military aid on both sides from the surrounding region. There is information of the Iranian Government supporting the Assad regime and the Hezbollah. This led to the United States becoming more reluctant to intervene. Despite the continuing internationalization of the civil war in Syria, by mid-2013 the conflict was no closer to being resolved, either by diplomacy or by military means. Neither the Assad regime, nor the opposition coalition, nor any insurgent group could turn the tide, and all diplomacy had failed at bringing the sides to the table.

Chemical Weapons Controversy

Until 21 August 2013, the warfare implemented on all sides of the Syrian conflict was conventional in nature; that is to say, it was mainly through the use of small arms and light weapons, artillery, and armored warfare on the ground. In late August, reports surfaced that chemical, weapons had been used, although on what scale and by what side was contested. According to an investigative committee of the UN, victims of the 21 August attack in the Ghouta area of Damascus reported experiencing artillery shelling followed by uncommon symptoms, which resulted in death or grave illness[22]. With this found, and other independent verifications of the incident underway, it had become clear to the international community that the Assad administration perpetrated an internationally condemned category of attack against its own civilians.

Soon after this, President Barrack Obama announced that the Syrian Conflict was open to negotiation. Previously, the only U.S. involvement discussed was limited military engagement or economic sanctions, and the President noted that there was no other recourse because of America's military intimidation of Syria. However, new developments, notably the willingness of Russia and its Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, in organizing talks with the U.S. and Syria, helped encourage the Obama administration[23]. While the U.S. Congress was prepared to vote on the use of military force prior to Russia's proposal, it was through Russia that the United States announced its willingness to attempt a diplomatic solution instead[24].

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[21]SC/11019, "Security Council al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Amends Entry of One Entity on its Sanctions List," 30 May 2013.

[22]"Syrian Civil War," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last modified 16 January 2014, accessed 25 June 2014,

http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1781371/Syrian-Civil-War.

[23]Barack Obama, "Weekly Address: Pursuing a Diplomatic Solution in Syria," *Office of the Press Secretary*, last modified 14 September 2013, accessed 25 June 2014, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/14/weekly-address- pursuing-diplomatic-solution-syria.

[24]*Ibid.*

As these trilateral talks began, the Assad government ratified the Convention on the use of chemical weapons. It was also proposed that the United States and Russia would jointly propose a plan to dismantle Syria's chemical weapons arsenal. Such radical steps forward were poised to ensure the total destruction of Syria's arsenal and open Assad to diplomatic options, a feat that was accomplished in its entirety on 18 August 2014[25]. It should be noted that the chemical weapons controversy was, in effect, an effort by the United States and Russia to focus the seemingly out-of-control Civil War on a single issue. This did not mean any significant success in helping solve the civil war.

Current Status

Refugee Crisis and Human Rights Violation

Among the most prevalent of the permeating subtopics within the Syrian Civil War is the expanding number of refugees and internally displaced persons. In addition to the previously cited 2.5 million refugees and 4.2 million IDPs, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria, a branch of the UNHRC, estimates that as of February 2014 more than 250,000 Syrians are besieged and under attack daily[26].

Any LAS member state may volunteer troops or other resources with a majority approval of the Council, provided permission has been received from the representative's government. Nearly 1.6 million refugees are concentrated in nearby Lebanon, which shares a large border with southwestern Syria and whose refugee numbers now make up nearly a quarter of the Lebanese population[27]. Most refugees believe that they cannot return home, making this issue extremely important.

In addition to this, the February 2014 UNHRC report cites slaughter of non-combatants, execution without due process of law, detainment without cause, torture, and gender discrimination as only some of the practices on all sides of the conflict that should be immediately addressed[28]. Solutions must be proposed to mitigate this crisis of human rights violations and the ongoing refugee crisis.

Continuing Prevalence of Extremism

Today, as the conflict in Syria rages on, the factionalism that resulted from the momentum and influence it has gathered permeates in extremist elements. Jabhat al-Nusra still operates as the official al Qaeda-endorsed cell group of Syria, but over the past year and a half it has come in contact and clashed with a rival organization vying for militant supremacy in the conflict zone. The Islamic State, formerly known as ISIS or ISIL (the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria/the Levant), is a transnationally operating insurgency whose stated objective is to establish a 21century Islamic Caliphate across Iraq and the Levant (modern-day Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine)[29]. While the earliest insurgent operations that would evolve into the Islamic State were originally sponsored by al Qaeda in U.S.-occupied Iraq, the Islamic State today has moved away from al Qaeda supported policies and towards a unique extremism that includes the targeting of Shiite cultural sites and various Muslim sects[30].

These two groups are primarily the extremist groups at war. The major developments among these groups can be beneficial for an in-depth understanding. Ultimately, the League must work to prioritize which organization is more threatening as well as in what way their extremist tendencies can be combatted. In the past, LAS member states have reaffirmed as a bloc their continuing efforts to counter terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa, but with the Islamic State declaring itself a sovereign state with legitimate political power, calling it a "factional group" may not apply for long[31].

[25]Thomas Gibbons-Neff, "Declared Syrian chemical weapon stockpile now completely destroyed," *The Washington Post*, last modified 18 August 2014,
 accessed 19 August 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2014/08/18/declared-syrian-chemical-weapon-stockpile-now-completely-destroyed/.
[26]A/HRC/25/65, "Report of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic," 12 February 2014.
[27]"UN Humanitarian Chief calls for greater support for affected Lebanese communities and Syrian refugees in Lebanon." *OCHA*. 4 April 2014.
[28]"UNHCR Global Appeal 2014-2015 Syrian Arab Republic," *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*, last modified 1 December 2013, accessed 25 June 2014, http://www.unhcr.org/528a0a2d15.html.
[29]"Background Guide." *Background Guide* (n.d.): n. pag. National High School Model United Nations 2015. Web. 22 June 2017. <http://imuna.org/sites/default/files/LAS.pdf>.
[30]Zachary Laub and Jonathan Masters, "Islamic State in Iraq and Greater Syria," *Council on Foreign Relations*, last modified 12 June 2014, accessed 25 June 2014, http://www.cfr.org/iraq/islamic-state-iraq-greater-syria/p14811.
[31]"Background Guide." *Background Guide* (n.d.): n. pag. National High School Model United Nations 2015. Web. 22 June 2017. <http://imuna.org/sites/default/files/LAS.pdf>.

Ongoing Conflict Mitigation

With neither side able to inflict a decisive defeat on the other, the international community long ago concluded that only a political solution could end the conflict in Syria. The UN Security Council has called for the implementation of the **2012 Geneva Communique**, which envisages a transitional governing body with full executive powers "formed on the basis of mutual consent".

Talks in early 2014, known as Geneva II, broke down after only two rounds, with then-UN special envoy LakhdarBrahimi blaming the Syrian government's refusal to discuss opposition demands.

MrBrahimi's successor, Staffan de Mistura, focused on establishing a series of **local ceasefires**.His plan for a "freeze zone" in Aleppo was rejected, but a three-year siege of the Homs suburb of al-Wair was successfully brought to an end in December 2015.

At the same time, the conflict with IS lent fresh impetus to the search for a political solution in Syria. The US and Russia led efforts to get representatives of the government and the opposition to attend "proximity talks" in Geneva in January 2016 to discuss a **Security Council-endorsed road map** for peace, including a ceasefire and a transitional period ending with elections.

Proxy War

What began as another Arab Spring uprising against an autocratic ruler has mushroomed into a brutal proxy war that has drawn in regional and world powers. Iran and Russia have propped up the Alawite-led government of President Assad and gradually increased their support. Tehran is believed to be spending billions of dollars a year to bolster Mr Assad, providing military advisers and subsidised weapons, as well as lines of credit and oil transfers. Russia has meanwhile launched an air campaign against Mr Assad's opponents.

The Syrian government has also enjoyed the support of Lebanon's Shia Islamist Hezbollah movement, whose fighters have provided important battlefield support since 2013.

The Sunni-dominated opposition has, meanwhile, attracted varying degrees of support from its international backers - Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Jordan, along with the US, UK and France.

Until late 2015, rebel appeals for anti-aircraft weapons to stop devastating government air strikes were rejected by the US and its allies, amid concern that they might end up in the hands of jihadist militants. A US programme to train and arm 5,000 rebels to take the fight to IS on the ground also suffered a series of setbacks before being abandoned.

Bloc Analysis[32]

While the geographical distribution of the following bloc positions are based with respect to Syria, it should be noted that exceptions and overlaps do occur in some places. The member states of the Arab League are not confined to opinion by geographic region, nor does every state agree on every issue with each member of its bloc. However, these blocs do offer a roughly accurate sketch of the differences in opinion expressed by the various member states of the League. The breakdown is approximately as such: a Levantine bloc whose population is anti-Assad but whose sects and parties provide Assad assistance and support; a Persian Gulf bloc whose Wahhabi adherents are strongly anti-Alawite and continue to support all efforts against the Assad regime; and a North African bloc, whose political changes in the wake of the Arab Spring result in serious concerns about national security and integrity.

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[32]Background Guide." *Background Guide* (n.d.): n. pag. National High School Model United Nations 2015. Web. 22 June 2017. <http://imuna.org/sites/default/files/LAS.pdf>.

POSITION PAPER GUIDELINES

Position papers are usually one to one-and-a-half
pages in length. Your position paper should include
a brief introduction followed by a comprehensive
breakdown of your country's position on the topics
that are being discussed by the committee. A good
position paper will not only provide facts but also
make proposals for resolutions.

A good position paper will include:
• A brief introduction to your country and its history
concerning the topic and committee;
• How the issue affects your country;
• Your country's policies with respect to the issue
and your country's justification for these policies;
• Quotes from your country's leaders about the issue;
• Statistics to back up your country's position on the issue;
• Actions taken by your government with regard to the issue;
• Conventions and resolutions that your country has signed or ratified;
• UN actions that your country supported or opposed;
• What your country believes should be done to address the issue;
• What your country would like to accomplish in the committee's resolution; and
• How the positions of other countries affect your country's position.

SAMPLE DRAFT RESOLUTION

General Assembly Third Committee
Authors: United States, Austria and Italy
Signatories: Greece, Tajikistan, Japan, Canada, Mali, the Netherlands and Gabon
Topic: "Strengthening UN coordination of humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies"
The General Assembly,
Reminding all nations of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human
Rights, which recognizes the inherent dignity, equality and inalienable rights of all global citizens, **[use**
commas to separate perambulatory clauses]
Reaffirming its Resolution 33/1996 of 25 July 1996, which encourages Governments to work with UN bodies
aimed at improving the coordination and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance,
Noting with satisfaction the past efforts of various relevant UN bodies and nongovernmental organizations,
Stressing the fact that the United Nations faces significant financial obstacles and is in need of reform,
particularly in the humanitarian realm,
1. Encourages all relevant agencies of the United Nations to collaborate more closely with countries at the
grassroots level to enhance the carrying out of relief efforts; **[use semicolons to separate operative clauses]**
2. Urges member states to comply with the goals of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs to streamline
efforts of humanitarian aid;
3. Requests that all nations develop rapid deployment forces to better enhance the coordination of relief
efforts of humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies;
4. Calls for the development of a United Nations Trust Fund that encourages voluntary donations from the
private transnational sector to aid in funding the implementation of rapid deployment forces;

5. Stresses the continuing need for impartial and objective information on the political, economic and social
situations and events of all countries;
6. Calls upon states to respond quickly and generously to consolidated appeals for humanitarian assistance;
7. Requests the expansion of preventive actions and assurance of post-conflict assistance through
reconstruction and development;
8. Decides to remain actively seized on the matter. **[end resolutions with a period]**

PREAMBULATORY AND OPERATIVE CLAUSES
PREAMBULATORY CLAUSES

The preamble of a draft resolution states the reasons
for which the committee is addressing the topic and highlights past international action on the
issue. Each clause begins with a present participle (called a perambulatory phrase) and ends
with a comma. Perambulatory clauses can include:
• References to the UN Charter;
• Citations of past UN resolutions or treaties on the
topic under discussion;
• Mentions of statements made by the Secretary-
General or a relevant UN body or agency;
• Recognition of the efforts of regional or nongovernmental organizations in dealing with the
issue; and
• General statements on the topic, its significance
and its impact.

SAMPLE PREAMBULATORY PHRASES

Affirming	Fulfilling
Alarmed by	Fully aware
Approving	Further deploring
Bearing in mind	Further recalling
Believing	Guided by
Confident	Having adopted
Contemplating	Having considered
Convinced	Having examined
Declaring	Having received
Deeply concerned	Keeping in mind
Deeply conscious	Noting with deep concern
Deeply convinced	Nothing with satisfaction
Deeply Disturbed	Noting further
Deeply Regretting	Observing
Desiring	Reaffirming
Emphasizing	Realizing
Expecting	Recalling
Emphasizing	Recognizing
Expecting	Referring
Expressing it's appreciation	Seeking
Fulfilling	Taking into consideration
Fully aware	Taking note
Emphasizing	Viewing with appreciation
Expecting	Welcoming
Expressing its appreciation	

OPERATIVE CLAUSES

Operative clauses offer solutions to issues addressed
earlier in a resolution through the perambulatory
section. These clauses are action oriented and should
include both an underlined verb at the beginning of
your sentence followed by the proposed solution.
Each clause should follow the following principles:

• Clause should be numbered;
• Each clause should support one another and
continue to build your solution;
• Add details to your clauses in order to have a
complete solution;
• Operative clauses are punctuated by a semicolon,
with the exception of your last operative clause
which should end with a period.

SAMPLE OPERATIVE PHRASES

Accepts
Affirms
Approves
Authorizes
Calls
Calls upon
Condemns
Confirms
Congratulates
Considers
Declares accordingly
Deplores
Designates
Draws the attention
Emphasizes
Encourages
Endorses
Expresses its appreciation
Expresses its hope
Further invites
Deplores
Designates
Draws the attention
Emphasizes

Encourages
Endorses
Expresses its appreciation
Expresses its hope
Further invites
Further proclaims
Further reminds
Further recommends
Further requests
Further resolves
Has resolved
Notes
Proclaims
Reaffirms
Recommends
Regrets
Reminds
Requests
Solemnly affirms
Strongly condemns
Supports
Takes note of
Transmits
Trusts