**Team 1: Government of Ruritania**

Name: Ruritania

Regime type: (Partial) democracy

Material capability: Same with Podoso

Population: 50 million

As the Government of *Ruritania*, you are worried about the national unity of *Ruritania*. Since your independence in 1911, one of the minority groups in your country (*Bongomians*) has achieved protecting their culture and ethnic identity. The central government of *Ruritania* has a fragile relationship with *Bongomians*. *Bongomians* have limited cultural and political rights. They have been demanding improvements in their cultural, political, and economic rights. Although there have been some occasional protests and violent acts, theyhave not used violent tactics to achieve autonomy or independence. But the recent economic crisis has worsened the economic conditions for *Bongomians* significantly, which triggered a dissent among them. In last two years, they have organized several protest movements. Also, some *Bongomians* have recently joined a radical religious terrorist organization in another country. You are worried that these *Bongomian* fighters might return to *Ruritania* and initiate an insurgency against the central government. Lastly, *Bongomians* have close ethnic ties with Podosos (the majority ethnic group in your neighbor country). So, you also suspect that *Bongomians* may receive help from Podosos in case of a rebellion.

First Round:

In the first round, you estimate (a) the *Bongomians*’ capacity and demands (what is the level of threat they pose), (b) the level and type of support *Podoso* would provide to the *Bongomians*. In other words, you will try to predict

* Would Bongomians resist if you repress them?
* What would be the cost of such a resistance?
* Would Podoso support the Bongomians if you repress the Bongomians?
* What would be the type and level of such a support by Podoso to the Bongomians?
* Are you willing risk an interstate dispute with Podoso by repressing Bongomians?

Keep in mind that you are not certain about any of these. You only have some policy options and each option may lead you to a certain outcome. You will estimate the potential consequences of your policy choices and make a decision.

You have two policy options in the first round:

1. Status-quo: You stay loyal to the status-quo by *not* changing your current policies. You neither repress the *Bongomians* nor grant more rights. You try to convince representatives of *Bongomians* to stay loyal to the central government, abide by the law, avoid violent tactics, and only use democratic channels to demand policy changes. Staying loyal to the status-quo will probably prevent radicalization of *Bongomians* or involvement of *Podoso.* However, the nationalist/conservative NGOs and citizens will put pressure on you to take an action to deal with this potential threat to national unity. Failing to solve this crisis might cost you losing the next elections.
2. Repress: You can repress the *Bongomians* to preserve national unity of *Ruritania*. It will consolidate your government’s authority. You have several tools to achieve this: (a) establish reeducation camps to assimilate the *Bongomians*’, (b) restrict language rights (such as banning education in mother tongue) to decrease the ethnic consciousness of the future generations , (c) imprison political representatives of the *Bongomians*, (d) increase the security force spending to be able to repress all protest movements, and (e) shut down media channels (and control use of social media) to prevent propaganda (Feel free to make additions to this list). You can use one of these tools or a combination of them to deal with the potential threat posed by *Bongomians.* When you repress the *Bongomians*, your government will (a) protect the national unity of *Ruritania* and consolidate your authority, (b) get the support of nationalist/conservative voters, and (c) deter other minority groups from rebelling. However, your repression of the *Bongomians* might (a) initiate an interstate dispute with *Podoso* (militarized, economic, or diplomatic depending on the type/level of *Podoso’s* support (or lack of support) to *Bongomians*), and (b) cause negative reactions from the international community.

Second Round (If Ruritania Government decided to repress the Bongomians in the First Round):

In the second round (assuming that you had repressed the *Bongomians* in the first round), you can change your policy after you (a) estimate *Podoso’s* reaction (the type and level of support they may provide to the *Bongomians*) based on the talk between *Bongomian* representatives and *Podoso* leader, (b) negotiate with *Bongomian* representatives, and (c) negotiate with *Podoso* leaders. You update your cost-benefit calculus after you negotiate with other actors and observe the negotiations between them. Now, you have two options in the second round:

1. Back down: In response to the *Bongomians’* resistance and *Podoso*’s support to *Bongomians,* you can back down by granting more political, economic, and cultural rights to *Bongomians*. It would diminish the dissent among *Bongomians* and prevent the extremists from getting support from the moderates. It would also (a) positively affect your relations with *Podoso* and other international actors; and (b) improve your reputation in the international community as you respect minority rights. However, it may encourage other minority groups in *Ruritania* (they may ask for more rights). Also, your government will be criticized by the nationalist parties/NGOs. You will probably lose the nationalist/conservative votes because of the concessions you made to *Bongomians*.
2. Defy: You can continue repression or even increase the level of repression (by using more repressive tools) after the *Bongomians’* resistance and *Podoso’s* support to the *Bongomians*. But, depending on the type and level of support provided by *Podoso* to the *Bongomians,* repression of *Bongomians* might cause a diplomatic, economic, or militarized crisis with *Podosos*. You are in charge of estimating the type and level of support by *Podoso* and deciding what kind of risks you can take.