



Massachusetts

Institute of
Technology

Model United Nations Conference

Background Guide

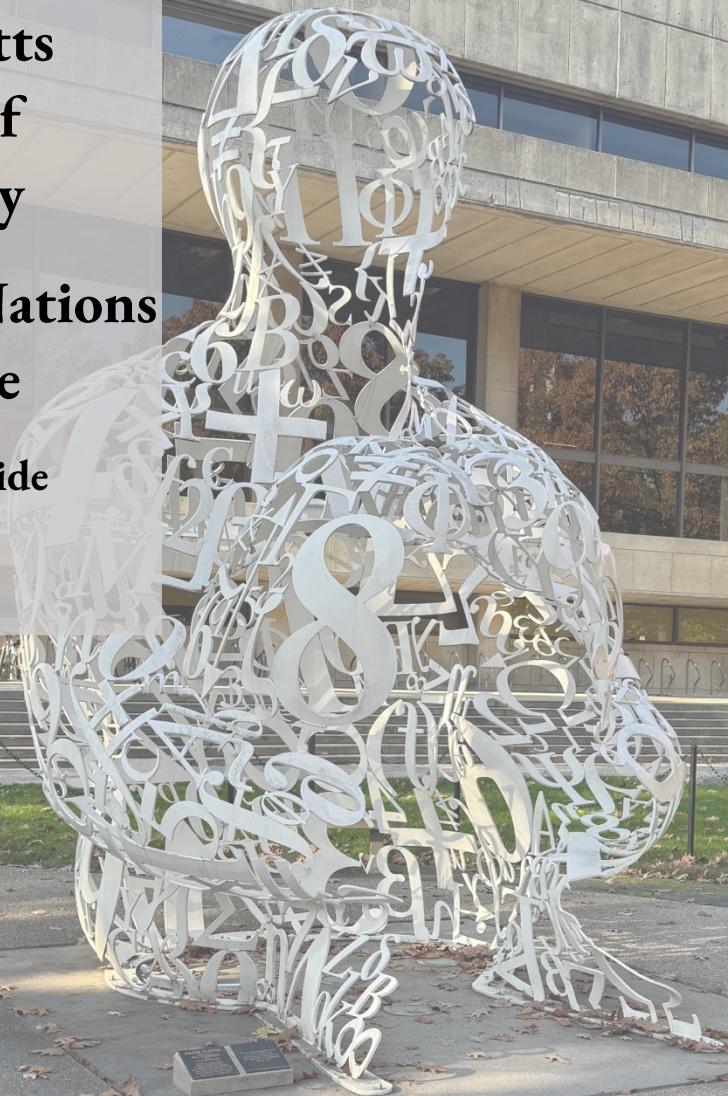


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Letter from the Secretary Generals

Dear Delegates,

It is with great pride and excitement that we formally invite you to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's 16th annual Model United Nations Conference!

MITMUNC is a premier Model UN conference in which students from all over the world come together to solve the most pressing issues facing society today. This year's conference will be held during the weekend of Friday, February 9th through Sunday, February 11th, 2024, in-person.

At its core, MITMUNC is planned, organized, and directed by a passionate and ambitious team of MIT students that collectively form a diverse family of academic backgrounds and experiences. Our chairs and staff coordinate MITMUNC's committees from the ground up, posing questions and controversies that even the most experienced delegates will find challenging. Our dedicated Secretariat members complement the chairs and staff by overseeing all conference preparations, months in advance of the conference in order to ensure that our delegates walk away with one of the greatest experiences of their lives.

In previous years, MITMUNC delegates grappled with complicated human rights, economic, and environmental topics such as the Syrian Refugee crisis, argued the pros and cons of nuclear energy in the International Atomic Energy Agency, and even reacted to a flurry of assassinations witnessed in the Historical Committee! Attendees also enjoyed inspiring keynote addresses by Nazli Choucri, Professor of Political Science at MIT and leading researcher in international relations and cyber politics, as well as Richard B. Freeman, Faculty co-Director of the Labor and Worklife Program at the Harvard Law School. Delegates also enjoyed a well-deserved respite at the Delegate Dance social night.

We pride ourselves in hosting smaller committee sizes. This allows our attendees more freedom to contribute and distinguish themselves in their individual committee sessions. MITMUNC offers its attendees a truly unique opportunity to immerse themselves in a demanding intellectual environment, exposed to the ideas of others and tasked to employ the art of negotiation to pass meaningful resolutions.

Having experienced MITMUNC as chairs, then as Secretariat members and Secretaries-General, we are both humbled and thrilled to guide MITMUNC into its best conference yet. I now invite you to explore our brand new website to learn more about our conference. Do not hesitate in contacting us should you encounter any doubts along the way. Best of luck in the path ahead!

Sincerely,

Your Secretary Generals: Jad Abou Ali and Maya Abiram

For further inquiries, do not hesitate to contact us at sg-mitmunc@mit.edu.

MITMUNC XVI 2024



Letter from the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to MIT Model UN's 16th conference and to the Iron Throne Crisis Committee! We are so excited to meet you and be your chairs!

I'm Evie, a junior studying Computer Science and Neuroscience here at MIT. This will be my second year chairing. Although I wasn't involved in Model UN in high school, I was a Congress debater. I had so much fun chairing last year and am so excited to work with you guys!

I'm Prat, your co-chair! I'm a senior at MIT majoring in CS and minoring in geology. This is my first year in MITMUNC, but I used to do MUN back in high school and loved it, especially crisis committees. I can't wait to meet you all!

We're both big fans of Game of Thrones, and we hope you have a good time engaging in its universe as you write your position papers and join us for the actual conference.

The topic this weekend delves into the governance of Westeros post-war. Following recent conflicts, what should the new political structure look like? Who are the rightful leaders to guide the realm forward? Join us as we explore the potential directions for Westeros' rulership and the key figures poised to shape its future!

Sincerely,

Your Chairs: Pratistha & Evie

For further inquiries, do not hesitate to contact us at crisis-2024-mitmunc@mit.edu.

MITMUNC XVI 2024



Committee Introduction

"Game of Thrones," a groundbreaking television series that aired from 2011 to 2019, is an epic fantasy drama based on George R.R. Martin's "A Song of Ice and Fire" book series. Set in the fictional continents of Westeros and Essos, the show weaves together tales of noble families vying for control of the Iron Throne and the Seven Kingdoms of Westeros while an ancient magical threat re-arises. The series received widespread acclaim for its production values, storytelling, and ensemble cast, making it a cultural phenomenon and a defining moment in the realm of television.

While this committee is inspired by the events of the series, delegates **do not need** prior knowledge of the show or books to partake, and some distinct changes have been made from the plot of the show to adapt it to a Model UN setting. The *Iron Throne* crisis committee primarily concerns itself with the final episode of the show where, in the wake of Daenerys Targaryen's failed conquering of King's Landing, the Seven Kingdoms are now without rule. As a result, key characters from the narrative convene to appoint a ruler and determine what the governance of Westeros will look like in this new age.



Topic: The Iron Throne and the Government of Westeros

I. Introduction: The History of Westeros

The history of Westeros in "Game of Thrones" and "A Song of Ice and Fire" is extensive and rich, spanning thousands of years. Here's a broad overview:

Age of Heroes: Thousands of years before the main events of "Game of Thrones," Westeros was populated by the First Men, the Children of the Forest, and other magical beings. The Age of Heroes saw the formation of various legendary houses and figures. During this age, the Long Night occurred—a period of darkness and cold that lasted a generation, during which the White Walkers first invaded. The Wall was constructed to keep them at bay.

Andal Invasion: The Andals invaded Westeros, bringing with them the Faith of the Seven. They displaced the First Men and marked a significant cultural and religious shift.

Targaryen Conquest: Aegon the Conqueror and his sister-wives, riding dragons, united the Seven Kingdoms under Targaryen rule. The Targaryens held power for nearly three centuries.

Robert's Rebellion: A rebellion against the Mad King Aerys II Targaryen. Led by Robert Baratheon, Eddard Stark, and Jon Arryn, it resulted in the fall of House Targaryen and the rise of Robert Baratheon as king.

Recent Events (Game of Thrones): The series begins with King Robert Baratheon ruling from the Iron Throne. Eddard (Ned) Stark becomes the Hand of the King, but political intrigue and power struggles intensify. The War of the Five Kings erupts, involving the

Starks, Lannisters, Baratheons, Greyjoys, and the North under Robb Stark. Daenerys Targaryen rises to power in Essos with her dragons, seeking to reclaim the Iron Throne. The Night's Watch faces the threat of the White Walkers beyond the Wall. Daenerys arrives in Westeros, and the fight for the Iron Throne becomes more complex. The Night King breaches the Wall, and the Great War between the living and the dead unfolds. Daenerys Targaryen's descent into madness results in her destruction of King's Landing. The series concludes with the establishment of a new order in Westeros, leading to this committee, where key characters have convened to decide what that will look like.

II. Geopolitics and Government of Westeros

In Westeros, the Seven Kingdoms function under absolute monarchy, with the hereditary monarch holding immense power vested in the Iron Throne. The Targaryens' conquest serves as the foundation of this system, enforcing allegiance through the right of conquest. However, the Iron Islands, the North, and Dorne retain distinct legal traditions, maintaining some sovereignty despite swearing fealty. These regions often wish for independence of the monarchy.

Westeros' governance comprises three primary bodies:

- the Crown, overseeing secular affairs under the king's direction
- the Faith of the Seven, guardians of culture and religious law
- Order of Maesters, managing communication and preserving the establishment

The Small Council, part of the Crown, includes key advisors like the

- Hand of the King
- Master of Coin
- Master of Laws
- Master of Ships
- Master of Whisperers
- Grand Maester

- Military advisors

The Seven Kingdoms consist of sovereign Lord Paramounts, each coming from a distinct family, ruling a province, and swearing fealty to the king. Tax structures and military fidelity are tied to these Lord Paramounts, although specifics remain ambiguous. See the map of Westeros below for a layout of the Seven Kingdoms and the families that rule each.

Westeros lacks a standing army, relying on potential nobles for military service. The warden system appoints generals for defense and control, but internal conflicts and political maneuvering among noble houses often challenge the king's authority. The stability of the realm hinges on the Lords Paramount upholding the crown's authority, preventing any one house from becoming too dominant, as witnessed in historical conflicts like the War of the Five Kings.



The Seven Kingdoms include:

- The North: A vast and cold region known for its honor-bound and resilient people. Winterfell serves as the ancestral seat of House Stark.
- The Vale: A mountainous region with impregnable castles, ruled from the Eyrie. House Arryn holds sway, known for its strong emphasis on chivalry.
- The Riverlands: A fertile land crossed by numerous rivers, it has strategic importance in many conflicts. Riverrun is the seat of House Tully.
- The Westerlands: A wealthy region with abundant gold mines, ruled from Casterly Rock. House Lannister, known for their wealth and cunning, holds power.
- The Reach: A vast and fertile expanse, known for its agriculture and ruled by powerful house Tyrell. Highgarden is the regional capital.
- The Stormlands: A coastal region that often faces storms, it is ruled from Storm's End. House Baratheon traditionally holds this domain.
- Dorne: A hot and arid land in the southernmost part of Westeros, known for its distinct culture and customs. Sunspear is the seat of House Martell.

While not one of the Seven Kingdoms, the Iron Islands are a semi-autonomous region within the realm under House Greyjoy.

III. Characters' Positions

A. Jon Snow

After Daenerys Targaryen's death, Jon Snow, also known as Aegon Targaryen, faces a tough situation. His Stark heritage gets him support in the North and beyond, but killing Daenerys brands him a traitor to many. Despite his sisters Sansa and Arya backing him, there are probably the same amount of people who would wish for Jon's death as for his rule. While he does not want the throne, he is willing to put the best wishes of the kingdom before his own, and is inclined to work with his siblings Sansa and Arya who may push for him for the throne as he would support their interests in a free North. Furthermore, he is close friends with Sam Tarly, and deeply respects his counsel and opinions. Nonetheless, Jon is currently a very controversial figure, and will need to clear his name from his past murders and betrayals to gain allies beyond his friends and siblings.

B. Tyrion Lannister

After betraying the Lannister/Baratheon rule of Westeros to support Daenerys Targaryen and subsequently opposing Daenerys as her madness became apparent, Tyrion is a man who strives to do what's right for Westeros despite family loyalties. Tyrion Lannister is a key mediator, aiming not for personal gain but for the appointment of the best ruler for the Seven Kingdoms. He's not interested in being king for personal reasons, although he wants someone wise in charge. Right now, he's a big supporter of Bran Stark. Tyrion sees Bran as uniquely qualified—detached from personal desires, with an uncanny understanding of Westeros' history and future. He believes Bran's insight and impartiality make him the best bet for stabilizing the realm.

As the last Lannister child, Tyrion has a lot of influence, wealth, and men at his disposal, although he's under close scrutiny of many members of the council due to his precarious history.

C. Grey Worm

Grey Worm, leading the formidable Unsullied soldiers in Daenerys' army, is vehemently against Jon Snow and Tyrion Lannister since Daenerys Targaryen's death. He's focused on seeking revenge and justice for her, caring little for the wider Westeros. Planning to leave, his sole goal now is avenging his queen. The Unsullied, loyal and skilled fighters devoted to Daenerys, stand by Grey Worm in his pursuit of justice, making them powerful allies in his quest for retribution against Jon and Tyrion.

D. Sansa Stark

Sansa Stark is set on the North's independence, prioritizing it over her ambitions for the throne. As Lady of the North, her sway and support among Northern houses are massive. She'll back anyone who respects the North's freedom.

Though Sansa doesn't aim for the throne, she'll throw her weight behind leaders who acknowledge and allow the North to govern itself. Bran Stark and Jon Snow stand out because of their understanding of Northern independence. Sansa's influence in the North helped her gather support from loyalists who valued the region's autonomy. Her focus on the North's freedom shapes her choices, ensuring any leader she supports respects this crucial Northern goal. She is very close with her sister, Arya, who shares her beliefs.

E. Brandon Stark

Brandon Stark isn't keen on ruling but is open to it if necessary. He's okay with letting the North be independent, content to rule over six kingdoms instead. His focus isn't on power, but he's ready to step up if it helps keep the realm together. Bran also has magical abilities- he is a warg and a greenseer. A warg is someone with the ability to enter the minds of animals and even control their actions, and a greenseer possesses the magical ability to perceive future, past, or distant events in dreams.

F. Samwell "Sam" Tarly

Samwell Tarly believes in democracy—an uncommon idea in Westeros. He represents House Tarly but is more into governance and learning than ruling. He's passionate about giving people the power to vote for their leaders, even though it's not a popular notion. With the realm in turmoil over the throne, Sam sees democracy as a solution for a fairer Westeros, and wants the actual people of Westeros to have a say in their ruler as opposed to a few representatives from the Great Houses. He's likely to ally with Jon Snow, his friend, and could push for change in the electoral process and governance. Sam's dedication to knowledge and fairness makes him a progressive force in a landscape of traditional power struggles.

G. Arya Stark

Arya Stark's main concern is ensuring her siblings' safety and securing the North's freedom. Her ultimate goal is to explore the world, free from Westeros' conflicts. Trained as an assassin by the Faceless Men in Essos, Arya's exceptional skills include taking on others' appearances after killing them. She's renowned for eliminating the Night King, showcasing her formidable abilities. Arya values a competent ruler for stability but prioritizes her family's well-being. Her friendship with Gendry could offer potential alliances. Arya's unwavering dedication to her family, coupled with her deadly skills, establishes her as a protector and a formidable force in Westeros.

H. Yara Greyjoy

Yara Greyjoy is a strong supporter of Daenerys Targaryen and condemns Jon Snow for killing her. She harbors deep resentment towards Jon for his actions. Yara's primary goal is the independence of the Iron Islands. She desires freedom for her homeland and is willing to seize any opportunity to achieve it, even if it means pursuing the Iron Throne herself. Yara's stance remains opportunistic, driven by her past loyalty to Daenerys and her fervent desire for the Iron Islands' autonomy, while also keeping an eye on the prospect of claiming power if circumstances favor her ambitions.

I. Brienne of Tarth

Brienne of Tarth is a competent knight and holds a friendship with the Starks. She's not self-centered and cares about the land's well-being. She'd support the Starks and is open to considering what's best for the realm. Brienne's sense of duty and willingness to hear different viewpoints make her a reliable and principled figure in the political landscape, as well as a mediator in deciding the path forward. Her experience and leadership in combat make her especially fit for positions such as the Kingsguard.

J. Ser Davos Seaworth

Ser Davos Seaworth isn't interested in claiming the throne. His focus leans towards shaping a fair government rather than personal power. He's more about rebuilding and advising, possibly taking on a role like Hand of the King or Master of Ships to contribute to the realm's stability. Davos values service over ambition, aiming to offer practical guidance in governing a post-war Westeros. He would be willing to support whoever he sees as fit without much bias.

K. Ser Bronn

Bronn's loyalty is to himself above all else. While he has connections with Tyrion Lannister, his allegiance shifts based on who offers the best rewards—be it money, power, or personal benefits. He's known for his pragmatic and self-serving nature, often prioritizing his own interests over any sense of steadfast loyalty. He aims to claim the titles of Lord of Highgarden and Lord Paramount of the Reach, and will throw his weight behind any people or plots that will help him achieve that goal.

L. Varys*

Varys, although absent from this specific scene in the final episode, will act as a key player in this committee. He shifted his loyalty from the Lannisters to Daenerys and later supported Jon Snow due to Daenerys's shortcomings. As the former Master of Whisperers, Varys seeks a capable ruler for the throne but isn't interested in ruling

himself. He strongly advocates for Jon Snow's leadership, believing in Jon's ability to govern justly and effectively for the realm's benefit. Varys's focus on capable leadership over personal power makes him a significant voice in the committee's discussions.

M. Petyr Baelish*

Petyr "Littlefinger" Baelish, while absent in the final episode of the series, will be playing a role in the committee. He is a master manipulator, driven by an insatiable thirst for power. His endgame is the Iron Throne, using deceit and strategy to reach it. While his immediate goal isn't clear, he craves a position of influence, whether on the throne or on the Small Council. Littlefinger's alliances are tactical, possibly with Sansa Stark, but his motives are always self-serving. He maneuvers through deception, aiming to climb the ladder to power through calculated schemes and cunning strategies. His relentless pursuit of power makes him a formidable yet unpredictable player in the game of thrones.

N. Dornish Prince of House Martell

The new Prince of Dorne is dedicated to securing more freedom for his region. Like Yara Greyjoy for the Iron Islands, he strongly advocates for Dorne's independence. With significant military might and wealth, Dorne holds considerable power. He's open to supporting any leader who promises Dorne greater autonomy. His allegiance hinges on whoever ensures Dorne's self-governance, making his support a game-changer in the realm's politics. Now that the continent is at a point of change, it is an opportune period of time to establish Dorne as an independent country.

O. Ser Jorah Mormont*

Jorah Mormont's staunch loyalty to Daenerys Targaryen leads him to likely oppose Jon Snow for her death. As a former member of Daenerys's inner circle alongside Grey Worm, Jorah is inclined to support Grey Worm's cause against Jon Snow. While seeking justice for Daenerys, his alliance with Grey Worm reinforces his position.

However, Jorah's ultimate goal remains peace in the realm, prompting him to possibly advocate for justice while pursuing a resolution that ensures stability and harmony.

P. Gendry Baratheon

Gendry Baratheon, the last heir of his line, commands the Stormlands, a powerful realm in Westeros. As someone with a legitimate claim to the throne, he holds substantial influence. While prioritizing the governance of the Stormlands, Gendry's position might lead him to consider pursuing the throne. Alternatively, he could opt for strategic alliances, leveraging his claim to forge powerful partnerships in the ever-shifting political landscape of Westeros. Gendry's potential to vie for the throne or form alliances makes him a noteworthy figure in the realm's power dynamics.

Q. Edmure Tully

Edmure Tully, the Lord of Riverrun, vies for the throne, but his claim lacks recognition. Despite influence in the Riverlands, he faces skepticism and lacks support for his aspirations. Though related to Sansa Stark, his allegiance favors personal ambition over Stark ties. While there's family connection, Edmure prioritizes his quest for power rather than Stark loyalty, focusing on his throne ambitions over allegiances.

R. Robin Arryn

Robin Arryn, leading the Vale, is young and inexperienced, leaving his political leanings uncertain. His ties to the Starks and Tullys might sway his support, but his main priority is the Vale's welfare. Due to his youth, his political alliances are unclear, and he prioritizes the Vale's stability above all else.

S. Yohn Royce

Yohn Royce has an unwavering loyalty to House Arryn and The Vale. Yohn Royce would probably support Robin Arryn's decisions. Yet, his extensive political

experience might lead him to engage in his own schemes and maneuvers when needed, despite his public support for Robin.

T. Howland Reed

Howland Reed is a loyal Stark supporter, and an old friend of Ned Stark. As a dedicated vassal, he likely favors an independent North due to his close ties to House Stark. While he has never met the Stark siblings, his loyalty to their father will most likely extend to them, albeit his son's death during Bran's adventures beyond the wall may impact how he feels about the boy.

**These characters have met their end in the Game of Thrones series, and their revival for the context of this committee is purely hypothetical, as their involvement is deemed significant for the ongoing discussions.*

IV. Conclusion

As we navigate the complex aftermath of the Westerosi conflict, it's imperative to consider a path that ensures stability, justice, and unity for the realm. Establishing a new political structure demands careful deliberation and collaboration among all stakeholders. Identifying leaders who prioritize the realm's welfare and possess the wisdom to unify the fractured kingdoms is crucial. Through diplomatic dialogue and consensus-building, we can forge a Westeros that moves beyond its tumultuous past toward a future of resilience, equality, and peace.

V. Questions to be Addressed

- a. **Political Structure:** What should be the political framework of Westeros? Should it stay an absolute monarchy or shift in structure?
- b. **Monarchy Status:** If it remains a monarchy, who should sit on the Iron Throne as the ruler of Westeros? Who should be the Hand of the king?
- c. **Council Members:** Who comprises the council advising the ruler? What roles do they hold, and how influential are they in decision-making?

- d. **Power Distribution:** How is power distributed among the ruling entities, including the Crown, Lord Paramounts, and other influential groups like the Faith of the Seven or the Order of Maesters?
- e. **Kingdoms and Families:** Are there still seven distinct kingdoms ruled by seven different families, or has the political landscape shifted with alliances or changes in leadership?
- f. **Sovereignty and Fealty:** How does the concept of sovereignty function among the various regions and families? Do they maintain autonomy while swearing allegiance to the central authority? What are the fates of the Iron Islands, the North, and Dorne, who are espousing sentiments of independence?

VI. Supplemental Material

A. Wikis for each character

- a. [Jon Snow](#)
- b. [Tyrion Lannister](#)
- c. [Grey Worm](#)
- d. [Sansa Stark](#)
- e. [Bran Stark](#)
- f. [Samwell Tarly](#)
- g. [Arya Stark](#)
- h. [Yara Greyjoy](#)
- i. [Brienne of Tarth](#)
- j. [Davos Seaworth](#)
- k. [Ser Bronn](#)
- l. [Varys](#)
- m. [Petyr Baelish](#)
- n. [Dornish Prince of House Martell](#)
- o. [Ser Jorah Mormont](#)
- p. [Gendry Baratheon](#)

- q. [Edmure Tully](#)
- r. [Robin Arryn](#)
- s. [Yohn Royce](#)
- t. [Howland Reed](#)

B. Season 8 Episode 6: Original Council Scene

- a. NOTE: while delegates do **not** need to watch the show or this scene as we are effectively retconning the ending and have changed the fates of several characters in this committee, parts of it can be found on YouTube (links below) or Max
- b. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4OByc9wes&ab_channel=MultiverseHeroes
- c. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATvfvZqf4iQ&ab_channel=Trepimero

C. General Lore

- a. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fE50xrnJnR8&ab_channel=Looper
- b. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-y3vLQ-dcSQ&ab_channel=DariuszSobotka
- c. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdC2b6IL9No&ab_channel=whycreate

VII. Bibliography

"Game of Thrones." Season 8, episode 6, HBO, 19 May 2019.

Martin, George R.R. A Song of Ice and Fire. Bantam Books, 1996-2011.