



T R E A T Y

KINGMUN 2019

BACKGROUND GUIDE



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TREATY

KINGMUN 2019

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to King County Model United Nations 2019 and the Paris Peace Conference. My name is Emily Compton, and I will be the very first director of this committee, a new addition to the crisis committees offered at KINGMUN 2019. I am a senior at Tesla STEM High School, and this will be the fourth and final committee I will staff in my MUN career. I am joined by two incredible first time staffers, Pranathi Ramesh, a sophomore from Juanita High School and Eric Xia, a sophomore from Lakeside High School.

The Paris Peace Conference is brand new — my team and I took everything we liked from typical crisis committees and made them better. You will get to learn with us, helping us shape one of the most famous treaties in history. We are combining the best of normal and crisis committees to give you the chance to change history by crafting a lasting treaty that rivals the original. Working with your allies and enemies, you will not only be pushing for peace, but vying for a political advantage over other powers.

The treaty we will be re-enacting is the infamous Treaty of Versailles, signed on June 28, 1919. We chose this topic for its broad background, complex nature, and many layers, which we hope will inspire creativity and new approaches to an age old problem: what must be done once the war has been won, and how far is too far for those who have lost to be punished? We as a Dais want delegates to branch away from what was originally negotiated after World War I and remember that many historians credit the Treaty of Versailles as the catalyst for the second World War. What will *you* do to change the course of history, both globally and for your own country?

As a Dais we have written a background guide for you to give you a deeper understanding of the topic and to help you to formulate positions and ideas for solutions. This should be your starting point for research, but don't limit yourself to

the background guide alone. It is our hope you can use the information provided and additional information that you collect to form your own questions, ideas, and solutions to the crisis at hand.

Feel free to email us with any questions you might have and we look forward to seeing you in committee!

Sincerely,
Emily Compton
Director | Paris Peace Conference

Committee Overview

The Paris Peace Conference is a unique committee in which delegates will assume the roles of historical countries who were influential in the creation of the Treaty of Versailles. This committee serves as an opportunity for you to rewrite history and potentially prevent some of the many issues that resulted from the creation of the original treaty. A once in a lifetime opportunity to fix the past, this committee will allow you to explore the many facets of World War I, conflict resolution, and diplomacy in a completely new way. With the ultimate goal of passing a treaty that may actually found sustainable peace and solve global issues, committee session will function with a unique set of Rules of Procedure (ROP) centered around the creation of the treaty. This committee is most suitable for advanced delegates who want to experience non-traditional debate and cooperate in an environment outside of the traditional Model UN format.

The Paris Peace Conference was originally a group of 32 diplomats from a variety of countries who made executive decisions about the future of the world following the end of WWI. The result of this conference, the Treaty of Versailles, is infamous for shaping the histories of colonialism, war, nationalism, and diplomacy. The Treaty is even responsible for the creation of the legendary League of Nations, the first intergovernmental organization dedicated maintaining world peace. After the League's failure to prevent WWII, the United Nations was established. Soon after, student-led League of Nations simulations became Model UN conferences; the very conference you have registered to attend was indirectly created by the decisions made during the Paris Peace Conference. At KINGMUN, you now have the chance to rewrite that history and forge a new path for the future following the events of WWI.

As delegates, you will be representing countries that have a vested interest in the result of this treaty. You must keep in mind the interests of your country, its involvement in the war, and the future it wants to see. In addition, the debate in this committee will be intense and controversial, making for an exciting conference. The

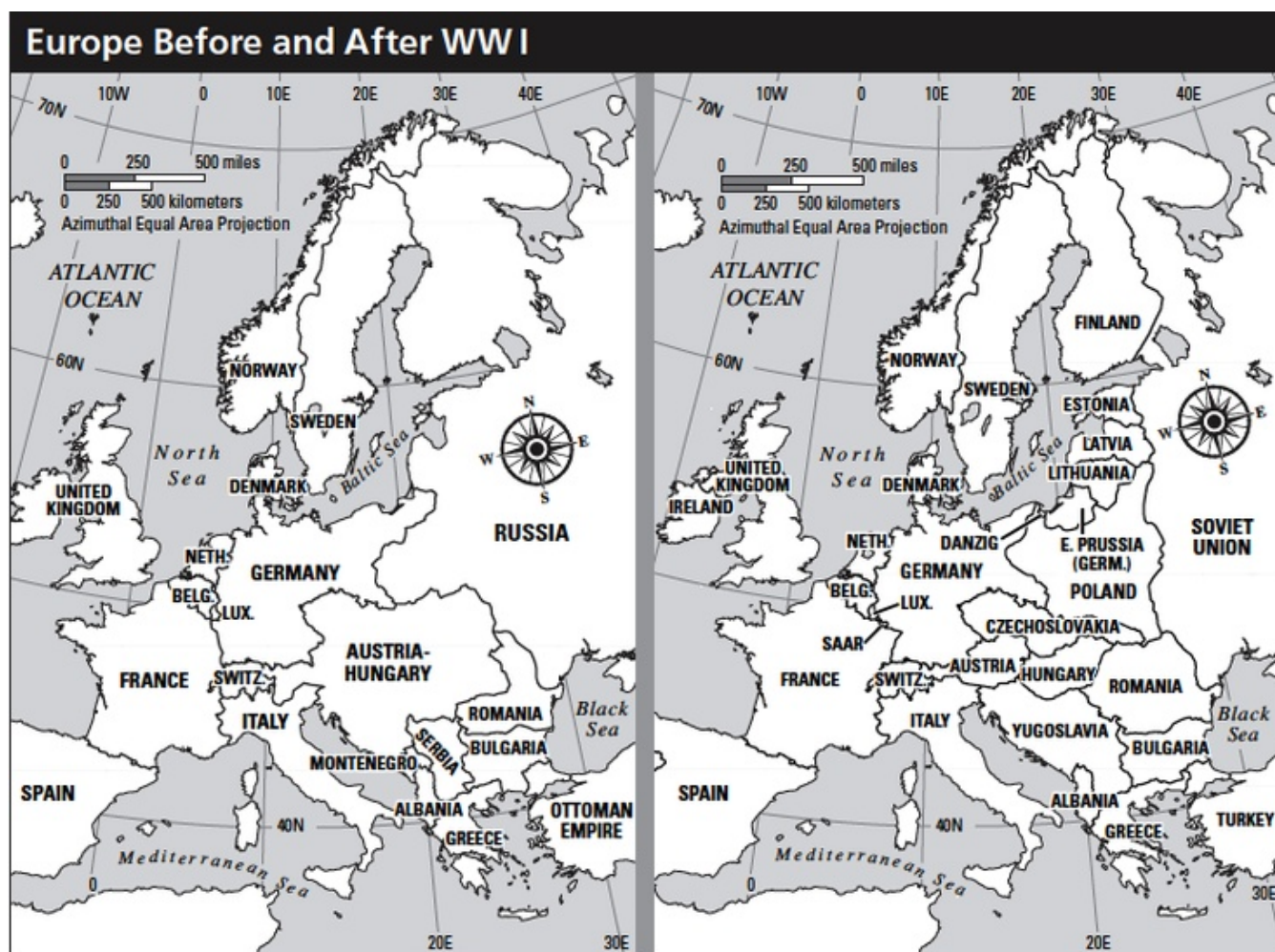
following background guide is intended to help further your understanding of the contexts behind the Treaty and guide your research and preparation for the conference.

This committee will require you to learn and work with new Rules of Procedure. These rules of procedure will be uploaded to the website and you will be notified when they are available. Additionally, the position papers you write for this committee will not be a typical position paper. For this committee, your position paper should be a page long, and should outline the history of your country within the context of WWI, how the decisions made during this conference will affect your country, and the ideas or reparations you seek to be affirmed within the treaty. Please include your country's involvement in the war and how these influence your decisions in your paper.

Position Papers are due by April 21st at 11:59 p.m. Please submit them to treaty@kingmun.org with your name, country, and "position paper" in the subject line.

Topic A: Treaty of Versailles (1919)

Overview of the Topic



While the Treaty of Versailles signalled the end of World War I, then known as the “Great War,” its clauses were ultimately responsible for shaping international relations and establishing frameworks for lasting world peace. Nearly every participant in the War experienced some changes to their own sovereignty as a result of the Treaty, as the Triple Entente — the victors — among other powers were given the right to annex the land of the Central Powers — those defeated. With empires subsequently collapsing and republics and even newly independent nations taking their place, these drastic changes to sovereignty left the European continent and surrounding regions in great turmoil and chaos. The devastation Germany

especially faced, as a result of the Treaty's reparations for supposedly starting the war, crippled the economy and destabilized the political state enough so that the Nazi party eventually took power. Meanwhile, Japan, in effort to increase its own security and gain exclusive access to natural resources, expanded the reaches of its empire by invading neighboring countries in Eastern Asia. In combination, these nations were able to start a second world war. One of the Treaty's greatest failures and predecessor to the United Nations, the League of Nations unsuccessfully prevented the conflict among several others in coming decades due to a lack of authority and jurisdiction.

However, at KINGMUN 2019, delegates have the opportunity to prevent or even change the course of these travesties. Unlike the original Paris Peace Conference, this iteration includes the voices of nations greatly impacted by its outcomes, such as Morocco and Algeria in Northern Africa among Siam and Vietnam in Southeast Asia. Even the Central Powers — Austria-Hungary, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire — have a greater opportunity to express their concerns, despite their defeat. With a more diverse range of perspectives, it is up to you, delegates, to return to 1919, determine how to establish sustainable world peace, and ensure the Great War is the first and only world war.

History

Pre-War Tensions

The Great War started on July 28, 1914 and ended on November 11, 1918. Known as the bloodiest war of its time, with millions of casualties attributed to the Spanish Flu epidemic, ethnic cleansings, famine, and use of biochemical weapons — in addition to the conflict itself. At the end of the war, the countries involved came to debate who was ultimately responsible for the deadly conflict and how they would claim responsibility. To truly understand who was to blame and what reparations must be paid, delegates must analyze the war as a whole from its greater underlying causes: militarism, imperialism, and alliances.

Prevalent British and German militarism in the late 19th century to early 20th century led to an arms race, which was a major contribution to the start of the war. As a result of the industrial revolution, the two powers had mobilized and developed their economies and actively competed with one another. In the 1870s, Germany was prompted to build more warships to protect their growing trade industry. However, the United Kingdom interpreted this mass production as a threat and in retaliation, built warships of its own. With both countries constantly trying to best each other, the arms race between them soon spread to most of Europe, raising tensions within the continent.

Much like the tensions caused by the arms race, hostilities grew between powerful European nations due to imperialism. For centuries, the United Kingdom and France had competitive motivations to build an empire greater than the other's. The British Empire stretched over five continents, and France had control of almost all of Africa. The extreme competitiveness between the two powerful nations increased tensions among other powers, who eventually took part in the war. Before then, several smaller wars and battles were fought over certain territories, primarily between a combination of Germany, France, or the United Kingdom. One of the most significant of these conflicts was between Germany and France over Morocco. France had plans to claim Morocco as a colony, but Germany consistently intervened to prevent it. The Germans claimed to be working for the independence of Morocco, but they had a vested economic interest in having the territory for themselves. Although the conflict ended in a compromise to split control of certain regions, the Moroccan Crisis became a milestone signifying the height of tensions between Germany and France that would soon show itself in the war.

Importantly, alliances were also the primary reason some countries entered the war at all. The main two blocs that participated in the Great War were the Allied Powers (known as the Triple Entente), and the Central Powers (the Triple Alliance). The Triple Entente was composed of the United Kingdom, France, and Russia, and its formation dates back to 1904. The Triple Alliance, however, was formed in 1882 and was composed of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. Within a few years, Serbia and Romania also joined the alliance. As such, if any of these countries were to be pulled into conflict, its allies would automatically be drawn in as well.

Other alliances existed as well between the following: Russia and Serbia; Germany and Austria-Hungary; France and Russia; France, Belgium, and the United Kingdom; and Japan and the United Kingdom.

Up to the beginning of the war, tensions between these two immensely powerful alliances grew and finally climaxed in Serbia. In 1911, a Serbian secret organization, the Union of Death, also known as the Black Hand, was formed. Three years later, a 19-year-old member of the Union of Death, Gavrilo Princip, assassinated Austrian archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28, 1914, while he was visiting Sarajevo. This incident became known as “the spark that started the war.”

The Beginning of the War

Following the assassination of Ferdinand, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914. Only five days later, on August 2, the German Empire, which was bound under its alliance with Austria-Hungary, declared war on Russia to

protect the vulnerable Serbia. Later, on August 4, after Germany invaded Belgium in order to attack France, the Belgium-France-United Kingdom alliance was provoked, leading those powers to enter the war against Germany on August 4. On the same day, the United States declared its neutrality. Although Italy and Romania eventually joined the war on the Central Powers' side, they would later side with the Allies before the conflict's end.

The first battle was the Battle of Frontiers, which began on August 14 and was fought in southern France and Belgium. This battle brought France the crucial time needed to defend and protect its capital Paris, however, it resulted in a defeat for the French and Belgian armies as they severely underestimated the strength of the German forces and artilleries. This battle alone demonstrates the innovative development of new war technologies and the crucial need to include new technological advances in war; cavalry and lines of men were no match for machine guns or chemical weapons. The Allies ultimately realized that they would lose the war if they were unable to retaliate with their own advanced weaponry.

Many battles were fought from long stretches of trenches along the French and Belgian border. This "trench warfare" shaped World War I, as both sides desperately vied to gain inches of territory. However, trenches became notorious for spreading disease and death throughout the war, failing to protect soldiers from exposure to chemical weapons and causing hundreds of thousands of deaths.

Within the same month and from the Eastern Hemisphere, the Japanese Empire chose to honor its alliance with the United Kingdom from 1902 and declare war on Germany in 1914. Although the empire didn't send troops to Europe until 1917, by the end of 1915, its forces effectively captured the German colony of Tsingtao in China and drove the German East Asiatic Squadron out of the Pacific Ocean.

On October 24, 1914, the Ottoman Empire entered the war on the side of the Central Powers, making it the third nation to join the war against the Allies. The Minister of War for the Ottoman Empire, Enver Pasha, intended to join the Central Powers as a defensive tactic and prevent invasion from Russia. However, there was little to no movement from the Ottomans for the first months of entering the war, as they needed extensive preparation to ready their armies and defenses. After mobilization, Pasha supposedly envisioned expanding the Ottoman Empire's reaches into Russia.

In December of 1914, Germany began carrying out bombings on the United Kingdom, a tactic it continued throughout the war. However, most of these attempts were unsuccessful and ineffective.

Height of the War (1915-1916)

In January of 1915, the Russian army appealed to the British for aid in the battle against the Ottomans. Britain's plan to combat the Ottomans became known as the Dardanelles Campaign, in which they plotted to navally bombard the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey and target the capital, Constantinople. However, British mobilization was severely delayed, allowing the Ottomans to take advantage of the situation and send in more troops. Britain's attempts at retaliation, including a mission to cut off communication to Constantinople, were greatly unsuccessful. By December of 1915, the British government observed its great, unilateral casualties and decided that the campaign was a complete failure. By January of 1916, British troops fully began to withdraw from the Ottoman Empire.



Meanwhile, on the Western Front, through February and March of 1915, French troops repeatedly launched offensives on Germany's trench barriers to no avail. Similarly, the United Kingdom experimented with different battle techniques but

had the same lackluster outcomes as France. The Germans profited greatly from these futile attacks and were able to maintain strong defenses. When in April of 1915, German troops launched an offensive attack on the Ypres Salient in Belgium, troops also met a stalemate due to improper deployment of weaponized chlorine gas. From May to September, the Allied Forces continuously met stalemates while casualties increased. Notably, several of these stalemates can be attributed to a failure to properly deploy chlorine gas on the enemy, which would otherwise provide a great advantage to either side. Overall, over the course of several months, the allies faced a plethora of failures to the defenders' benefit, as they lost 242,000 men, and the Central Powers only lost 141,000.

On the Eastern Front, Russia had been preparing to attack Prussia, the leading state of the German Empire in March of 1915, only to be undermined when Germany overtook four of Russia's divisions. In May of the same year, German and Austro-Hungarian troops launched the highly successful Gorlice Attack, from which the Central Powers observed a successful invasion of Russia as they crossed the Wisłoka, the San, the Jarosław, and took the Przemyśl and Lemberg. However, following the Central Powers' second attack, the remaining Russian troops were able to escape eastward. By the end of August, western Russia (now present-day Poland) was occupied, and 750,00 Russian prisoners were captured. Despite this success, the Central Powers missed a major opportunity when they let Russian troops escape after the second offensive attack.

By October of 1915, Bulgaria, observing its close economic ties with Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, agrees to join the war on the side of the Central Powers. Within months, the country invaded Serbia and neutrally-sided Greece to prevent any exchange of aid between the two countries. However, Bulgaria was immediately overwhelmed by British forces, which forced the country to withdraw from the war months before its fellow allies.

While the Austro-Hungarian armies attacked Lutsk in Western Russia, their initiative ended with a stalemate. By the end of 1915, the Allied forces, with the exception of the United Kingdom, had lost strength in troops and resources. The leaders of the French, Belgian, and Italian armies decidedly held a meeting along with representatives from the Japanese and Russian armies to discuss war strategies. They planned a joint attack on Germany in 1916, signalling a strong alliance amongst themselves. However, the plan was eventually dismantled by German forces, and only the British army was able to pursue it.

Between 1915 and 1916, Germany overlooked Russia and Italy as minor threat and decided to attack France. It developed the strategy of eliminating France's manpower and the French town of Verdun, launching the heaviest bombardment that the war had seen. The Germans trampled French trenches and barbed wire

fields, and this prompted the Russian, Italian, and British armies to counterattack the Germans from different points along the Western Front. However, by July, the German Army had taken Fort-Vaux and Fort-Douaumont, soon approaching the Belleville Heights on the outskirts of Verdun. Right before the Germans could reach the cities, however, the Allies launched an attack on the Sommes River, forcing the Germans to retreat and no longer send divisions to France. Though the German army never made it to the heart of Verdun, the Battle of Verdun was the longest and most brutal battle of the war, with a German death toll of 350,000 and a French death toll of 400,000.

Upon this major loss, France began to look more extensively at its colonies and protectorates for sources of labor and soldiers in the war effort. Most young men in territories including Algeria, Madagascar, Morocco, and Senegal were conscripted, despite wide scale anti-war sentiments express by their people. Eventually, up to 30% of France's armies would be composed of soldiers from Indochina, particularly Cambodia and Vietnam. These soldiers were reportedly incentivized to go to war through pensions, reduced taxation, and for some, propaganda or even vague promises for increased citizens rights. Although seemingly appealing to poverty-stricken territories, many men were forced to become soldiers anyway.

In June of 1916, the Russian army implemented the Brusilov Offensive, which became known as Russia's last impactful military action in the war. On June 4 and 5, the Austro-Hungarian army was so startled by the Russian offensive that the Russian army easily plowed through their defenses. By the end of July, the Russians has taken over 200,000 prisoners. However, by September, when Russian troops were forcing Austro-Hungarians evacuate from Bukovina, they lost about one million men, not only by death, but also as deserters and prisoners. This heavily decreased the morale of the army.

The Brusilov Offensive posed great advantages and equally great consequences for the Allies. The Offensive forced the Germans to pull seven troops from the Western Front, and it prompted Romania's entrance into the war on the side of the Allies. The country was especially incentivized to annex Austro-Hungarian territory where many Romanians lived. However, through September and November of 1916, the German troops continually defeated Romanian attacks and defensive lines. By December, the Romanian army had no choice but to fall eastward and rely on Russian troops. This retreat allowed the Central Powers to gain access to all of Romania's oil wells and wheat fields.

The British naval blockade, which prevented supplies from reaching the Central Powers, began to have a serious impact on Germany in late 1916. German civilians began to suffer malnourishment from the winter of 1916 onwards. In Austria, the lack of food caused riots and eventually widespread starvation.

On January 19, 1917, the British intercepted what would be known as the Zimmerman Telegram, in which Germany attempted to convince Mexico to join the war. This telegram, along with the sinking of the MRS Lusitania, a British ocean liner carrying 128 American passengers, served as catalysts for the United States' entry into the war. After its declaration war on Germany on April 6, the German Chancellor declared unrestricted submarine warfare on the American supply line, with the goal of starving the United Kingdom out of the war.

However, supplies continued to Europe to the consternation of the Central Powers, and Germany's plan to starve the United Kingdom into submission ultimately failed. With the US entering the war and the Central Powers' prowess in battle decreasing, the odds seemed to be in the Allies' favor.

The End of the War (1917-1918)

In 1917, the Russian Revolution began amidst growing anti-war sentiments and calls for revolution. After all, Imperial Russia didn't have the resources to match up against an industrialized German Empire. Food and fuel shortages plagued Russia all throughout the war, their casualties numbering higher than any other nation in the war. The Russian economy was also hopelessly disrupted by the costly war effort. Many people lost faith in the leadership of the czar and wanted out of what they saw as a hopeless war. On March 15, 1917, Tsar Nicholas II was removed from power. On November 17, the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, overthrew the Russian government and declared Russia a communist state. Shortly after, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed, effectively taking Russia out of the war, ceding a third of its territory to the Central Powers in exchange for peace. Although some Allied powers began to distrust Russia following this exchange, the outcome of WWI was nonetheless left to be decided on the Western front, and Germany began focusing their troops westward.

The Central Powers were aware that they could not win a protracted war once America joined the Allies, but they maintained that a final offensive before the American troops arrived would force the Allies to surrender; American troops didn't arrive in Europe until two months after the declaration of war on Germany had passed. However, both the Allies and Central Powers became wary of the growing social unrest and revolution in Europe following the bloody aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution. In France, for example, mutinies from within the army became a frequent occurrence, as veterans from the Battle of Verdun refused to continue fighting.

As a result, both sides urgently sought an immediate and decisive victory along the Western front. Germany launched the Spring Offensive in March, hoping to defeat the Allies before reinforcements from the United States could be fully deployed. Their goal was to outflank and defeat the British Army at the Somme river and force the French to seek an armistice. However, the German offensive failed, partly due to a lack of supplies. Shortly after, the Battle of Cantigny occurred — the first major American offensive. The Allied powers began to push back, quickly gaining territory with the support of one to two million American troops who used improved artillery techniques and operational methods.

On July 15, 1918, the Germans launched a final offensive, hoping to defeat the British Expeditionary Force in France. The battle, known as the Second Battle of the Marne, ended on August 6 as a decisive victory for the Allies, won with the aid of several hundred tanks. This marked the start of 100 days of continual advances by Allied Forces until the end of the war.

On November 11th of 1918, Germany finally agreed to an armistice with the Allies in Europe, and the fighting infamously came to an end at 11 a.m. on the 11th day of the 11th month. This initial armistice was very favorable to the Allied side, being largely written by French commander Ferdinand Foch. The terms included the cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of German forces to behind the Rhine River, and a joint-Allied occupation of the Rhineland — the buffer zone between German and French territory. The terms of the peace treaty were to be decided later. However, until the actual peace treaty is signed, the British will maintain the blockade of Germany and continue to starve civilians of resources.

Current Situation

The Paris Peace Conference begins on January 18, 1919 in the Palace of Versailles, two months after the end of the Great War. Historically, during the conference, the main victors of the war, France, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Italy led a large portion of the decision making. With the leaders from every nation pushing for the agenda of their own nation, the conference held an intense atmosphere. However, the delegates at the conference were able to agree that reparations must be implemented onto the countries who were responsible — in the eyes of the victors — for the start of the war. Over the course of the conference, several treaties were implemented that succeeded implemented these reparations. The most notable was the Treaty of Versailles, which aimed to retribute Germany, who the victors believed to be the primary cause of the war. Whether or not this retake of the conference will once again blame Germany and force it to pay reparations is up to the delegates.

The conference begins immediately following the events of the war. For every country represented, the atrocities committed by both the Allies and Central Powers are not to be forgotten anytime soon. Every aspect of the war, from treaties to armistices to signed alliances, is subject to scrutiny. Each nation has a view of how to move forward from this point, and the Paris Peace Conference is its opportunity to make its vision a reality.

As it stands, Europe is in shambles. Much of the war took place on European soil, and it is left up to them to recover from the destruction. Additionally, many countries have been left in financial or political ruin. Empires are on the brink of collapse, and this is exacerbated by the massive debt accumulated over excessive military spending. The brunt of Europe's economic downfall may end up being felt by their colonies, a primary source of income for many of these countries. This in combination with the echoes of the Bolshevik Revolution, communism has gained a foothold in Europe, gathering popularity among poor laborers and founding future rifts between the Allies, especially the United States and Russia. Countries in Europe are pressured to set the blame and rebuild in the carnage left by the Great War, and during the Paris Peace Conference, they will also need to establish the precedent for how this will occur.

Germany is still shut off by the blockade from the rest of the world with very little food and supplies. Civilians are dying from starvation and disease, lacking the imports that Germany was dependent on. In addition, Germany's economy is crippled, poverty-stricken, and facing hyperinflation. The future of Germany's political state is also ambiguous, as power and stability seem to slip away from the newly established National Assembly of 1918. While the Allies are eyeing lucrative territories for themselves, such as the industrialized Ruhr, Germany must ensure that it doesn't continue to lose its most important assets.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire has largely dissolved into different ethnic groups, and nationalist movements are on the rise. Slavs, Croats, and Serbs, among other groups are demanding autonomy and self-determination, a request that the United States has expressed favor to granting. Like the German Empire, Austria-Hungary's political future remains ambiguous as well; destruction and poverty caused by the war have furthered instability in the region, leaving it susceptible to socialist movements inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution.

Each of the Central Powers is required to negotiate a separate peace with the Allied Powers, which are already seeing tensions rise over secret agreements and promises of land.

The rest of the world is not much better off than Europe; the war left few untouched. Colonies and protectorates, particularly those in northern Africa and

southern and southeast Asia are struggling, as many of them were drawn upon for men for the military and money for funding the military machine. These territories are undergoing great nationalist movements, as poverty-stricken populations are demanding compensation for their losses or an expansion of their rights. While their voices were historically overlooked by the Allies, delegates must be aware of the repercussions if these territories are to fall to violent independence or secession movements.

Even the United States has much to potentially gain through this treaty; despite its late entry into the war, its contributions were key to ending the war. As such, the United States demands to have a say in the future of international relations and world peace. The views of their current president, Woodrow Wilson, has a massive influence on its allies.

The Fourteen Points, an offer of peace initially proposed by Woodrow Wilson, was historically superseded by territory grabs by the British, French, and Japanese. However, the proposal itself includes frameworks to prevent another “Great War” by calling to end all secret treaties; the universal reduction of armaments; the withdrawal of foreign powers from Russia, Belgium, France, Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro; the establishment of an independent Poland; the autonomy and self-determination of Turkey and Austria-Hungary. Wilson also proposed the creation of an international organization dedicated to maintaining world peace, known as the League of Nations. Some of these points, especially those regarding independence and granting self-determination, are highly contested and leave open opportunity to future conflict. Wilson’s Fourteen Points cannot be overlooked in debate.

Ultimately, the shared goal of every country represented at this conference is to assure that nothing like the horrors of the Great War ever have to be suffered again. Some believe that there must be a guilty party that shoulders the blame for the war; others would believe that peace and cooperation is the only way to prevent worse atrocities. The decision is now up to you, as you take on the world’s most influential treaty.

Bloc Positions

Allied Bloc

Algeria, Belgium, France, India, Italy, Japan, Morocco, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Siam, United Kingdom, United States of America, Vietnam

In the Allied bloc, nationalist identities run strong in nations who have recently proven themselves on the battlefield, such as Canada and Australia. There is divide between those who want heavy reparations from Germany, especially France, and those who wish to call for a fresh start. The Allied Bloc is initially extremely receptive of the Fourteen Points and the plan for a League of Nations, as proposed by US president Woodrow Wilson. These plans call for open diplomacy and sovereignty worldwide. However, hypocrisy committed by the British and the French in the secret Sykes-Picot agreement have created rising tensions among the Allies. It has also raised the issue surrounding granting territory to Italy for their support in the war.

There is also controversy surrounding Palestine, which has been promised by the British in two separate agreements with the Arab and Jewish people. Additionally, many colonial territories see the principles of sovereignty in Europe, such as the creation of a Polish state, as conflicting with colonialism in the rest of the world by Western powers. Self-government is being pressed for by India, who, along Japan and Russia, were important Allied forces in the war. They feel disdain towards the Triple Entente and want to be considered as equals in the negotiation process. Russia in particular feels slighted by the Allied forces because of their plots with the czarist government against the new revolutionary forces. Finally, there is disagreement among the Allied powers about the extent of which to punish Germany. France lost territory to Germany in the Franco-Prussian War and feels that the Rhineland, a buffer region between Germany and France, should be under their own control. Other powers believe that reparations should not be too harsh for Germany, as its responsibility for causing the war is minimal in relation to the actions of other countries; there are also potential repercussions for cruelly punishing Germany alone. The divisions between those in the Allied Bloc are many, but they must not lose sight of the fact that they alone have the power to rightly punish the Central Powers.

Central Powers Bloc

Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Germany, Ottoman Empire

The defeated central powers countries are concerned with the fate of their countries, which in many ways are at the mercy of the other countries attending the negotiations. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, the German Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the Kingdom of Bulgaria are those who remain on the Central Powers' side, despite the numerous internal struggles some of these countries have had. The German Empire is feeling the most anger and blame directed towards them, as they were most powerful and active of the Central Powers in the war. This puts the empire in the precarious position of being the leader of a major alliance that has lost, making them the scapegoat for the war.

Not only will failure in these negotiations lead to economic ruin, it also could spell the end of the “empire”. The Ottoman Empire, being pulled into the war by Germany’s promise of economic boosts, loans, and the re-claiming of lost territories and colonies, plus the added strain of religious conflict. The Austro-Hungarian Empire has been severely weakened by the war, especially in their defeats when fighting Serbia early in the war. The political instability within the government added to strife and made Austria-Hungary a less powerful force than the German Empire, which fell into disarray before the war ended. The Kingdom of Bulgaria was one of the last countries to join the war for the Central Powers, partially because of their defeat by Greece, Serbia, and Romania in 1913. Its main motivation was to regain lost territory, but it is now painfully in a position of a double defeat by the Allies. Despite the many defeats, the Central Powers must do their best to negotiate their way from a fate of complete decimation by the treaty to protect their territories, the livelihood of their people, and their very hope for the future.

Guiding Questions

1. Imperialism, alliances, militarism and nationalism were all causes of the war. Which countries contributed the most to each of them?
2. Should all the nations represented at the Conference have a say in the Treaty? What determines a nation’s right to determine its clauses?
3. Who was ultimately responsible for the war and why?
4. If you are representing an allied power, based on destruction in your country caused by the war, how and to what extent should defeated nations pay in reparations?
5. France and the United Kingdom have historically created protectorates out of the former Ottoman Empire, elusively promising self-determination for those territories. If protectorates are to be pursued again (if at all), then how can the granting of this self-determination be guaranteed?
6. What territories should be taken from the Central Powers? How should their colonies be distributed amongst the Allied Powers? Should they be given away at all?
7. What actions must be taken to ensure that another war does not break out? How can ethnic conflicts, nationalism, and independence movements be quelled, if at all?

8. How can colonies use World War I to justify their pleas for independence?
Should independence for colonies be a part of the treaty?
9. What would ensure the long-term success of the League of Nations?

Additional Resources

An overview of the main causes of the war, militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism in World War I

<https://www.historyhit.com/the-4-m-a-i-n-causes-of-world-war-one/>

A reliable introduction to events from the end of the war and the formation of the original treaty.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/20th-century-international-relations-2085155/Peacemaking-1919-22#ref32843>

Detailed impacts that World War I had on different nations represented at the Paris Peace Conference.

<https://www.historyonthenet.com/effects-of-world-war-1>

An overview of the different blocs and nations represented at the Paris Peace Conference.

<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/paris-peace>

Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, a proposed framework for international peace.

http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp

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