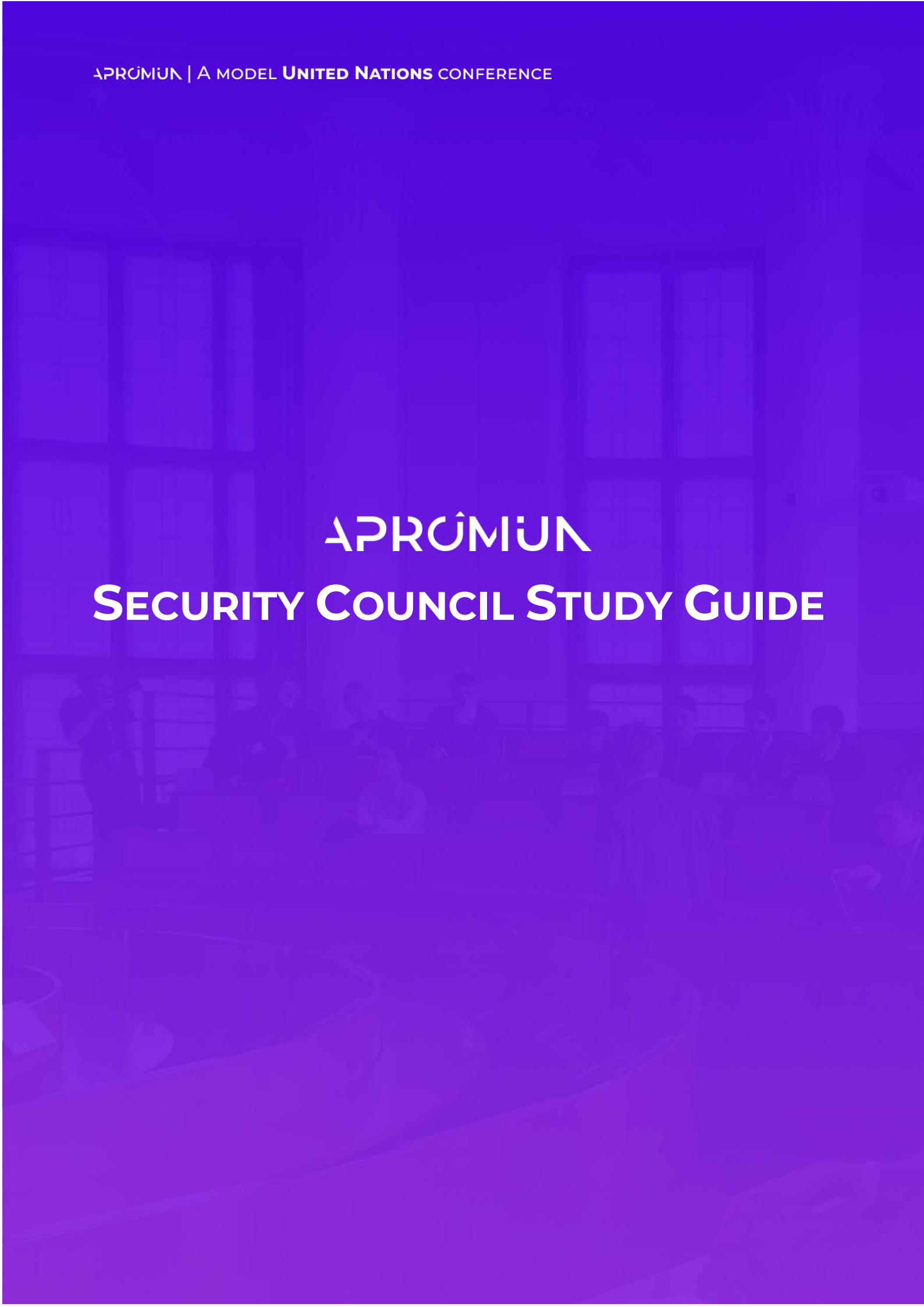


APRÓMÚN

SECURITY COUNCIL STUDY GUIDE



I. Table of Contents

I. Table of Contents.....	1
II. Letter from the Chairs.....	2
III. History of the Region.....	3
IV. War in Transnistria.....	6
V. Understanding the Current Quagmire.....	9
VI. Timeline.....	10
VII. Points to Consider	12
VIII. Research	13
IX. Position Paper	14
X. Further Reading	15

II. Letter from the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

It is our greatest honour to welcome you to **AproMUN's 2023 Security Council**. As your chairpersons, we can promise that we will make every effort to keep the debates on the highest possible level and provide you with a genuinely **unforgettable experience**.

For now, we would like to ask you for cooperation. Drafting this document, we wish to bring you closer to the discussed matter. Therefore, we highly recommend perusing those contents carefully. However, the Study Guide should not remain your only source of knowledge. We strongly encourage you to **expand your research** as it will help you represent your country and, possibly, get awarded.

Another task waiting for you is to prepare the **Position Paper** - a document containing a detailed overview of the government's policy regarding the discussed topic. We also encourage you to write an opening speech, which every delegate will present at the beginning of the debates.

Last but not least, we ask you to follow our social media, where you will be informed about the deadlines and organization. We are looking forward to seeing you in **October!**

Sincerely,

Mišo & Palo

III. History of the Region

Over the course of history, the region of Moldavia, now called Moldova, acted as a frontier of 4 great powers – Hungary, Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth, Russia and the Ottoman empire. The latter 2 were the most significant for modern Moldovan history as we will see later. Its arable land and good access to rivers and to the Black Sea made it a territory wanted by all powers in its vicinity.

During the 14th and 15th century, the Principality of Moldova was formed after a series of wars with all its neighbours, mainly with Hungary but also Poland and Wallachia. In the mid-15th century, it came under the Ottoman Empire as a vassal state. In 1812 the Ottomans ceded a large portion of the principality to the Russian empire following the Russo-Turkish war (1806-1812). The 400+ years of Ottoman control in the Balkans left a legacy of various Turkic minorities in the region, one of which - the Gagauz people, moved to the region during the Russian period of control.

During the period of control by the Russian Empire, it was administered as the Bessarabia Governorate. The remaining parts of the old principality west of the river Prut joined Wallachia to form the kingdom of Romania at the beginning of the 19th century. After the Russian revolution in 1918, the territories between the river Prut and the Dniester changed hands. First, they declared independence and then they joined Greater Romania, which the USSR never recognized.

In 1924 the USSR created the Moldavian ASSR along the Dniester River to show the Moldovans that they would respect their minority rights and to radicalize the Bolsheviks in Bessarabia. As we know from history, the Soviets (and Russians) were never good at protecting minority rights, this was the same case. Despite this fact, the Moldavian ASSR was a sort of pre-cursor of modern-day Transnistria.

In 1939, the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact between the USSR and the 3rd Reich was signed. Even though this was meant to be a non-aggression pact, this document meant that the Soviets now demanded Bessarabia and pretty much half of Europe with it. They managed to gain Bessarabia in June 1940 and created the Moldovan SSR. Stalin quickly purged the country in the face of his ideological

cleansing. The rest of Greater Romania aligned with the Germans. In 1941, Romanians managed to re-invade the territory as part of the German attack on the USSR and held it until 1944.

In 1944 the Soviets retook the war-torn region scarred by massive famine, collectivization and mass deportations. The Moldovan SSR found itself dominated by ethnic Ukrainians and Russians, while ethnic Romanians (the majority of the SSR) never really stood a chance against such oppression. The prime example was the Dniester region squeezed between the Ukrainian SSR and the Dniester river. This region was fully integrated into Russian culture, heavily industrialized and preferred over the rest of the SSR due to its sizable Ukrainian and Russian majority.

In 1989 a series of large strikes took place in the republic. Motives behind the strikes were not unified, however. Some wanted integration with Romania, others full independence. Already in 1989, the supreme soviet of the Moldovan SSR decided to change the official language from Russian to Moldovan and changed the official script to be Latin Romanian alphabet instead of Cyrillic. The fall of Ceausescu in Romania led both Russians and Moldovans believe that reunification with Romania would be inevitable. In early 1990 the Popular Front of Moldova won the elections into the supreme soviet of the SSR and seized the monopoly on power from the communist party. In a few months, the Moldovan SSR renamed itself to the Republic of Moldova and by making Moldovan law superior to Soviet law declared de-facto independence from the collapsing USSR. Soon, the Popular Front leadership started making moves towards reunification with Romania – loosening border controls and adopting a similar flag as Romania's. however, this was not taken well among the ethnic minorities of the country (about 35% of the demographics), mainly in the Dniester region.

However, the situation in Moldova only got worse. The Gagauz ASSR, proclaimed in 1989, declared its independence in 1990. Thankfully for the Moldovans though, the Gagauzia affair can be called a dispute rather than a full-blown war. Gagauzia and the central government of Moldova reached an agreement in 1994 and

Gagauz people were granted partial autonomy, thus ending the issue. However, the Moldovans were not so lucky with Transnistria.

The main motive of Transnistrian independence was the region's loyalty to the USSR – hence their flag to this day. The 'language laws' as they became known caused outrage among the Russian-speaking population, since they didn't speak Moldovan (Romanian). The Russian and Ukrainian population there believed that by reunifying with Romania the region would lose its importance and that they could be the ones oppressed in the new state. After all, it used to be the most prosperous region of the Moldovan SSR. On September 2nd, 1990, the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed, however, Gorbachev himself nullified all the decisions by the Second Congress of People Deputies of Transnistria. Therefore Transnistria, or 'Pridnestrovie' in Russian, became one of the several unrecognized 'republics' in the post-soviet space along with Abkhazia, Artsakh, and South Ossetia. Moldova became fully independent from the Soviet Union on 25th of December 1991.

IV. War in Transnistria

It is disputed as to when the war started officially, some claim it started as a low-scale war in 1990, some argue that it should be classified as a war only since the moment Moldova joined the UN in 1992 and the conflict grew in scale. For our purposes, we will stick to the first claim.

The first clash between Moldovan authorities and Transnistria separatists happened in Dubasari on November 2nd, 1990, when pro-separation residents of Transnistria blocked a bridge on the Dniester, effectively cutting it off from the central government. A police dispatch was sent to clear the roadblocks, however the locals resisted. The Moldovan police opened fire which resulted in 13 wounded and 3 killed. These became the first casualties of the war.

In March 1991, small groups of armed separatist forces were formed in Tiraspol, Dubasari, Ribnita and Tighina (now called Bender).

In May 1991, the situation intensified when the supreme soviet of Transnistria ordered all police officers in the territory to obey the separatist ministry of interior.

After the failed August coup attempt in Moscow, Moldova proclaimed independence. In the newly written constitution, it stated that the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and actions that had been taken referring to it 'had no legal basis'. This was interpreted by the Pridnestrovian Moldovan Republic (PMR) as dissolution of the merger of the 2 sides of the Dniester from 1940, thus a green light for their independence. In mid-September 1991 the president of the PMR – Igor Smirnov took over the command over all Soviet troops in Transnistria along with its arms stockpiles. This all spiraled down quickly and attacks on police stations in cities loyal to Chisinau became regular.

We have to bear in mind that at the time of the clashes, Moldova did not have its own professional army. The first attempts to establish one came in 1992 after the fighting had intensified. Until then, the bulk of the fighting was done by paramilitary groups and the police. By 1992 Moldova was able to muster around 30 000 military personnel including called-up police officers, volunteers, conscripts and reservists. Its military stockpile consisted of inherited soviet arms

and also military support from Romania. Romania also sent military advisors and volunteers.

On December 13th 1991, the attack on the Dubasari bridge took place. Shortly after, guards of the PMR occupied bridges along the Dniester and established control points. On December 25th the USSR collapsed. Most of the Soviet military personnel outside of Russia was inherited by the respective successor states, not in Transnistria though.

On March 2nd 1992, Moldova joined the UN as the 174th member along with 7 other post-soviet countries. This date is considered as the official start of the war by some sources. On the same day, the separatists began attacks on Dubasari. The CIS's (commonwealth of independent states) press agency quickly blamed Moldova for being the aggressor. A few days later, some 2500 Russian Cossacks arrived in Tiraspol and started helping the PMR separatists by forming paramilitary units. This translated into attacks on infrastructure – mainly bridges over the Dniester, but also an attack on a Moldovan police station in Roghi which led to 15 dead.

On March 15th 1992, president of the PMR, Smirnov, signed a decree granting social protection for military personnel, to win the Russian 14th army's loyalty. Chisinau responded with an ultimatum, demanding that the separatists lay down their weapons by March 17th. Chisinau also offered a compromise – Transnistria could become a 'free economic zone' and the revision of territorial administration would take place. On March 20th at the UN meeting in Helsinki, a peace mechanism was proposed by Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and Romania, yet it did not change the situation on the ground. A new ultimatum was issued by Chisinau prolonging the date to March 30th.

By the start of April 1992, the 14th Russian Army was fully involved in the conflict on behalf of the separatists. Even though a ceasefire was signed at the Chisinau airport, only the Moldovans respected it while the separatists continued their frontal assault. Peace talks took place all along, however after several rounds of negotiations the Russian Defense Minister, Grachov, ordered the 14th army to take combat positions and defend Transnistria as Russian land.

The most painful loss for the Moldovans was the city of Tighina. To this day it represents a bridgehead on the right bank of the Dniester. The battle took place from 19th to 21st of June 1992. According to some sources, Moldovans suffered up to 500 total casualties, both wounded and killed in combat. The ceasefire was signed on June 21st, 1992, marking the end of the war in Transnistria.

The conflict claimed the lives of up to 2000 and another 2000 wounded in total. Until this day, PMR functions as a de-facto independent state with questionable sources of income and strong ties to Russia. The 14th Guards army, about 2000 men strong is still deployed in Transnistria. The conflict became frozen, which is not uncommon for post-Soviet conflicts. What is rare however, is the fact that fighting never reignited and that the 2 states enjoyed a relatively peaceful, albeit uneasy, relationship. This all changed after February 24th, 2022.

V. Understanding the Current Quagmire

The rapidly evolving landscape of post 24th of February 2022 events have shaped the current situation in the country. Since the invasion of Ukraine, **inflation** in Moldova has skyrocketed from pre-war 16.56% in January 2022 to its peak of **34.62%** and it currently sits at. Massive inflation led to an extreme increase in the cost of living department which led to mass protests in the capital Chisinau, during which the protestors demanded governmental help with the issue. This protest was one of many from the series of anti-government protests which was ignited in September 2022 due to the energy crisis following the Russian invasion earlier that year. As a result, prime minister Natalia Gavrilița was forced to **resign** due to the inside and outside pressure in February 2023. Since then, President Maia Sandu was obliged to name a new cabinet of ministers which is led by Dorin Recean since 12th of February. In April this chairperson of European parliament Roberta Metsola visited Moldova and met with the president to discuss Moldova's future in the **EU**. A few months later 45 Russian diplomats and employees of the Russian embassy in Chisinau were expelled due to the accusations associated with espionage. Moldova as of today is still facing **hybrid warfare threats** combined with high inflation and extreme cost of living, all of which led to polarized society and an insatiable political situation. People in Moldova live in constant fear of war. There were multiple instances of Russian artillery flying through Moldovan airspace aiming for targets in Ukraine. The debate that Moldova may become the new frontline of Russian aggression never really settled.

VI. Timeline

1359 - The Principality of Moldavia was founded under the rule of Prince Dragoș. It gradually expands its territory and becomes an independent state.

16th-18th centuries - Moldavia and neighbouring Wallachia come under Ottoman rule, although they retain some autonomy.

1812 - The eastern part of Moldavia is ceded to the Russian Empire after the Treaty of Bucharest, forming Bessarabia.

1859 - Wallachia and Moldavia unite to form the Principality of Romania under the rule of Domnitor Alexandru Ioan Cuza.

1878 - After the Russo-Turkish War, the Congress of Berlin recognizes Bessarabia as part of the Russian Empire.

1918 - Following the collapse of the Russian Empire and the chaos of World War I, Bessarabia declares its independence from Russia and votes to join Romania.

1940 - Bessarabia is annexed by the Soviet Union as part of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.

1941 - Nazi Germany invades the Soviet Union, and Bessarabia is briefly under Romanian control again until the Red Army retakes the region in 1944.

1947 - Bessarabia is officially incorporated into the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, a constituent republic of the Soviet Union.

1990 - The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic declares its sovereignty, and in 1991 it becomes the independent Republic of Moldova after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

1992 - Transnistria, a breakaway region in eastern Moldova with a significant Russian-speaking population, declares independence and a brief armed conflict ensues.

1994 - An agreement is signed between Russia and Moldova aiming to withdraw Russian troops within 3 years of the signing, yet this never took place since the Russian Duma never ratified this document.

2001 - Vladimir Voronin becomes the first democratically elected communist president of Moldova.

2009 - Pro-European protests, known as the "Twitter Revolution" or "April 2009 events," lead to a change in government and a pro-European orientation.

2014 - Moldova signs an Association Agreement with the European Union, signalling its aspirations for closer ties with the EU.

2016 - Moldova elects Igor Dodon as president, who had a more pro-Russian stance.

2020 - Moldova holds a presidential election, and Maia Sandu, a pro-European candidate, wins the presidency.

2021 - Moldova faces political turmoil and a constitutional crisis as a result of tensions between the president and the parliament.

2022 - War in Ukraine, Inflation in Moldova skyrocketed to an all-time high. Moldova was granted candidate status by the European Union in March that year. Threats of Moldova being dragged into the Ukraine conflict.

2023 – Western intelligence community warns Moldovan officials about the threat of pro-Russian demonstrations and seizure of the Chisinau airport. After resignation of former prime minister Natalia Gavrilița new cabinet was appointed by President Maia Sandu.

VII. Points to Consider

- Couldn't Moldova just recognize Transnistria as an independent state and quickly join Romania to get into NATO & EU?
- Is there any military resolution to this conflict given Ukrainian military capabilities in 2023?
- Is the situation in Moldova nowadays tied to the outcome of the Russian invasion of Ukraine?
- What can be done in order to stabilize the political situation in the country?
- Should the UN peacekeeping force be deployed to the border between Transnistria and Moldova?
- Should Romania and Moldova merge into one country?

VIII. Research

Please keep in mind that this document is only a guide to your research of the topic, which should direct you to what is being discussed. The majority of the research, however, should be done by you. When researching, make sure you keep in mind these recommendations:

- Make sure you know basic information about your assigned country/group – leader, population, political system, foreign relations (especially with other members of the committee), etc.
- Check your country's policies and approach to drug trafficking, how it tries to stop it, or does not try to stop it. Find out how effective these measures have proven.
- Find out how the topic specifically affects your country. Does it provide supply or demand? Is your country on the trafficking path?
- It is recommended to familiarize yourself with the policies of other countries in the committee.

IX. Position Paper

The position paper should be at least a half-page document, but one page is the standard, outlining your country's involvement and stance on the topic. It should cover these points:

- Present your country's approach to the agenda topic.
- Describe your country's past and present actions undertaken regarding the agenda topic, highlighting their effectiveness or lack of it.
- Introduce ideas for the resolution.
- Make sure your position paper, as well as your statements during the debates, correspond with the country's policy.
- Including factual knowledge, such as charts and statistics is highly recommended.

X. Further Reading

Videos

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XMBHIA_KYVU&list=LL&index=1&ab_channel=HistoriaRediviva

(watch with English subtitles, probably the best video on the topic)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=phiapMuyQ3w&list=LL&index=2&ab_channel=HistoryMatters

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bf0j26bCbKA&list=LL&index=3&ab_channel=Asianometry

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIISevEw6Sg&ab_channel=EmperorTigerstar

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wi0BJrKOwo&ab_channel=Geographics

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWH1aTjoS7U&ab_channel=Warographics

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IO4Pbmt4lg&ab_channel=ProfJamesKerLindsay

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=09gyVNZgcY0&t=304s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v22AFjx3rxc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHxGKJMX5hw&t=317s>

Articles

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gagauzia_conflict

<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/growth-in-un-membership>

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Transdniestria>

<https://www.dw.com/en/will-the-war-in-ukraine-spell-the-end-of-transnistria/a-64363639>

<https://balkaninsight.com/2022/03/17/three-decades-on-the-spark-that-ignited-war-in-moldova/>

<https://www.bnm.md/en/content/inflation>

<https://www.ukrainianworldcongress.org/moldova-expels-russian-45-diplomats-and-employees/>