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UNSC

(Foreign Intervention in) Syrian Civil War



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Welcome,

Permanent Members

1. United States of America
2. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
3. French Republic
4. People's Republic of China
5. Russian Federation

Observer Nations

6. State of Israel
7. Republic of Yemen
8. Kurdistan
9. State of Qatar
10. Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
11. Republic of Turkey
12. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
13. Republic of Iraq
14. Islamic republic of Iran
15. Syrian Arab Republic
16. State of Palestine.
17. Lebanese Republic
18. Arab Republic of Egypt
19. Kingdom Of Bahrain
20. State of Kuwait



Foreword

Greetings Delegates!

For all the newcomers out there, let me introduce you to MUN. Model United Nations is quite possibly one of the world's greatest inventions not because of the organization it models but rather because of the opportunities it presents for students. There are all the obvious ones such as enhanced leadership skills, strengthened communication ability, and a more critical thinker. But there are also all the other less academic but equally as important benefits. MUN allows us to explore another side of ourselves and grants us a platform with which we can use to express ourselves and become more confident in who we are.

MUNBANK is an online conference and this provides the unique opportunity to interact with delegates globally and not only hone your networking and socializing skills but also benefit from the advantages of working with a global perspective. We are Gen-Z and part of what makes us so special is our awareness of the world outside our communities. Online conferences such as this are a way to access multiple viewpoints and grow as a person.

But please, don't be nervous. We aren't asking for diplomats and world leaders. Instead, we are asking for students who are committed to trying their hardest and are willing to take advantage of this conference in order to grow. If this is your first or your last conference, we want each of you to speak. Every delegate has valuable ideas and solutions to the problem at hand and we want every delegate to contribute and become a part of this committee. We want you to study and prepare but we also want you to have fun and take something away from this conference. We can't wait to see you soon!

Best Wishes,

The Dais of the Security Council



Introduction

The Syrian Civil War began in 2011 and the current President is Bashar Al Assad. He has been in power since 2000 and his father governed Syria before him from 1970-2000. When the war first started, there were four main parties: the Kurdish forces, the Assad regime, ISIS, and other opposition (this includes several groups such as Jaish al Fateh which is an alliance between the Nusra Front and Ahrar-al-Sham).

The Civil War started with pro-democracy protests after several teenagers were arrested and tortured after graffiting revolutionary slogans in their school. Security forces opened fire on the demonstrators and this only caused more people to revolt. This resulted in hundreds of thousands of people protesting and calling for President Assad's resignation. As the violence escalated, rebel groups were formed in order to take control of cities and towns and get rid of security forces. This caused the country to collapse into civil war with groups such as ISIS also getting involved and heavy foreign intervention from global powers. A UN commission of inquiry provided evidence that all parties in the conflicted had committed war crimes such as murder, torture, rape, and disappearances. Moreover, several parties have caused civilian suffering by blocking access to water, food, and health services. Although the Security Council has demanded that all parties cease the use of weapons in populated areas, civilians continue to be affected and die in the thousands. The government is not innocent in this as by dropping bombs on rebel areas, many civilians have been killed- enough to be considered a massacre.

Hundreds of civilians have also suffered due to chemical warfare. Although the government blamed rebels, sources said the only possible culprit could have been the government. President Assad agreed to remove and destroy Syria's chemical weapons supply due to the US threats; however, completing the operations there has still been reports of chemical weapon usage. This conflict has left 4.5 million people escaping Syria with a further 6.5 million internally displaced. This influx of refugees has caused external political problems due to countries working out who should shoulder the burden of these refugees.



Background

The Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. With its 15 Members, and each Member having one vote, under the Charter of the United Nations, 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 Syrian Civil war has been damaging humanitarian infrastructure since its beginning in 2011. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) projected that 11.7 million people in Syria would require humanitarian and protection assistance as of 2019.

Instead of securing funding to address the population's vital needs, the Syrian government developed a legal and policy framework to co-opt humanitarian and reconstruction funding to advance its own interests. Aid groups, United Nations agencies, and donors participating in abusive reconstruction efforts, or allowing aid diversion without due diligence, risked complicity with the government's human rights violations.

Not long after its commencement, all the neighboring countries along with their allies started to use the Syrian battlefield to continue the fight amongst each other. With the United States of America supporting the Syrian Democratic Forces and the Free Syrian Army, and the Russian Federation supporting the Syrian Ba'athist Government along with Iran, the Syrian Civil War has continued to grow as years pass by without any solid developments of peace in the region.

Non-state armed groups opposing the government also committed serious abuses, leading arbitrary arrest campaigns in areas they control and launching indiscriminate ground attacks on populated residential areas in government-held territory. In northeast Syria, the number of civilians killed and the degree of destruction as a result of the US-led coalition and its local ally, the Syrian Democratic Forces, suggested a degree of destruction and loss of life in areas held by



the extremist group Islamic State (ISIS) that indicate a failure to take all necessary precautions to protect civilians.

Definitions

Civil War

A civil war is a war that occurs within a country. Typically this is between the government and rebel groups or two halves of the country. In this situation, it is the government against the rebels.

Chemical Warfare

The Syrian government used chemical warfare against civilians and rebels several times. Chemical warfare is using toxic chemicals to kill or incapacitate an enemy. This action was seen negatively by the international community.

Sanctions

In an effort to fix the situation in Syria, the US had several sanctions on the country. Sanctions are penalties that a country gives another if it doesn't follow a rule. The most common type of sanctions are economic.

Relief Organizations

Relief organizations are organizations that provide aid for people in disaster areas. Because of the situation in Syria and the extent to which civilians are being affected, many NGO's are attempting to help the situation by aiding civilians.

Rebels

Rebels are people who rise against a government or leader. President Assad was originally a rebel in the first Syrian Civil War but was the one whom the rebels rose against during the Second Syrian Civil War.



Civilians

Civilians are people not in the armed services or the police force. Because civilians are not soldiers, there are multiple laws in place to protect them as they are innocent.

Referendum

Referendums are votes taken by citizens on a single matter. The outcome of the matter has been relegated to public opinion and their decision decides what happens.

Ceasefire

Ceasefires are temporary suspensions in fighting. This ideally leads to peace talks and an end to the war. There have been multiple ceasefires in Syria but none that lasted long.

Key Parties

Syrian government

The Syrian Ba'athist Government is politically and militarily supported by Iran and Russia and is prominently reported to receive support from the Lebanese Hezbollah group, the Popular Front Liberation of Palestine - General Command (PFLP-GC) and the Syria-based Palestinian liberation group.

Syrian Opposition

The Syrian opposition, politically represented by the Syrian National Coalition, receives financial, logistical, political and in some cases military support from major Sunni states in the Middle East allied with the U.S, most prominent ones being Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey. From the early stages of the Syrian conflict, major western countries such as the U.S, France, and the UK have provided political, military and logistic support to the opposition and its associated rebel groups in Syria voicing against the Syrian Ba'athist Government.



Russian Federation

Russia is one of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's most important international backers and the survival of the regime is critical to maintaining Russian interests in the country. It has blocked resolutions critical of President Assad at the UN Security Council and has continued to supply weapons to the Syrian military despite international criticism. Moscow wants to protect a key naval facility which it leases at the Syrian port of Tartus, which serves as Russia's sole Mediterranean base for its Black Sea fleet, and has forces at an air base in Latakia, President Assad's Shia Alawite heartland. In September 2015 Russia began launching airstrikes against rebels, saying the so-called Islamic State (IS) and "all terrorists" were targets. However, Western-backed groups were reported to have been hit.

President Vladimir Putin has said that only a political solution can end the conflict.

United States of America

The US has accused President Assad of responsibility for widespread atrocities and says he must go. But it agrees on the need for a negotiated settlement to end the war and the formation of a transitional administration. The US supports Syria's main opposition alliance, the National Coalition, and provides limited military assistance to "moderate" rebels.

Since September 2014, it has been conducting air strikes on IS and other jihadist groups in Syria as part of an international coalition against the jihadist group. But it has avoided attacks that might benefit Mr. Assad's forces or intervening in battles between them and the rebels.

A programme to train and arm 5,000 Syrian rebels to take the fight to IS on the ground has suffered embarrassing setbacks, with few having even reached the frontline.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia says President Assad cannot be part of a solution to the conflict and must hand over power to a transitional administration or be removed by force. Riyadh is a major provider of military and financial assistance to several rebel groups, including those with Islamist ideologies,



and has called for a no-fly zone to be imposed to protect civilians from bombardment by Syrian government forces.

Saudi leaders were angered by the Obama administration's decision not to intervene militarily in Syria after a 2013 chemical attack blamed on Mr Assad's forces. They later agreed to take part in the US-led coalition air campaign against IS, concerned by the group's advances and its popularity among a minority of Saudis.

Turkey

The Turkish government has been a staunch critic of Mr Assad since the start of the uprising in Syria. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said it was impossible for Syrians to "accept a dictator who has led to the deaths of up to 350,000 people".

Turkey is a key supporter of the Syrian opposition and has faced the burden of hosting almost two million refugees. But its policy of allowing rebel fighters, arms shipments and refugees to pass through its territory has been exploited by foreign jihadists wanting to join IS. They agreed to let the US-led coalition against IS to use its air bases for strikes on Syria after an IS bomb attack in July 2015.

They have been critical of coalition support for the Syrian Kurdish Popular Protection Units (YPG) - an affiliate of the banned Turkish Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) deemed a terrorist group by Turkey, the European Union and the US.

Syrian Democratic Force

The SDF, an alliance of Kurdish and Arab militias, was founded in 2015, nearly four years after the Syrian Civil War erupted. The Kurdish group is fighting for self-rule in northeast Syria as they say they have experienced discrimination historically. Its makeup largely consists of YPG fighters and smaller groups of Arab, Turkmen and Armenian fighters.

Turkey considers YPG, which forms the bulk of the SDF forces, an extension of PKK, which has waged an armed campaign that has killed more than 40,000 people since 1984.



Turkey's first operation, named "Euphrates Shield", saw Ankara cross into northwest Syria in 2016 to clear the area of ISIL and the YPG fighters. Two years later, Russia allowed Turkey to launch another operation to expel the YPG from northwest Kurdish-majority city of Afrin. The operation, named "Olive Branch" resulted in Turkey securing its border with Syria to the west of the Euphrates River.

Iran

Iran is believed to be spending billions of dollars a year to prop up President Assad and his Alawite-dominated government, providing military advisers and subsidized weapons, as well as lines of credit and oil transfers. Mr Assad is Iran's closest Arab ally and Syria is the main transit point for Iranian weapons shipments to the Lebanese Shia Islamist movement, Hezbollah.

Iran is also believed to have been influential in Hezbollah's decision to send fighters to western Syria to assist pro-Assad forces. Militiamen from Iran and Iraq who say they are protecting Shia holy sites are also fighting alongside Syrian troops.

Iran has proposed a peaceful transition in Syria that would culminate in free, multi-party elections. It was involved in peace talks over Syria's future for the first time when world powers met in Vienna.



Scope of Debate

This agenda of the Syrian Civil War is vast as well as complicated at the same time so we as the Executive Board firstly expect all of the delegates to be thorough with the entire timeline of the Syrian conflict and know all aspects of the entire situation.

Here are a few topics of the debate that we believe shall be discussed in the committee, please keep in mind that the debate is not limited to these topics only, you are more than welcome to come up with new topics to debate.

- Foreign Intervention in Syrian Civil War
- Human rights Violation by the parties involved in Syrian conflict
- Role of non-state actor groups in the conflict
- Role of Private Military Security Companies in the current situation of war.
- Existence of Kurds in the region and roles played by them in the war
- Possible solutions to the conflict.

Proposed Solutions

As described by few of the major world leaders that Syrian Civil war is one of the most complex wars in the history of the world, reaching to solutions requires diplomacy and a non-biased approach towards the people suffering in these areas keeping the political interests of countries aside. Here is a list of a few of the proposed solutions:

Syria's zones of control

One of the few solutions in maintaining peace is by dividing the country into zones of control by various states as well as non-state actors. Syria can be divided into (i) Bashar Al- Assad's multi factional statelet i.e the coastal and west central region of the country including Damascus, Aleppo, Latakia, Homs, and Hama. (ii) Al- Qaeda's Northwestern Haven which consists of the areas of north and west of Aleppo. (iii) Northern Syria being divided between Turkey and Kurds. (iv) ISIS held eastern Syria (v) Moderate opposition buffer for Jordan and Israel in South-west.



Kofi Annan's Six Point Plan for Syria

Kofi Annan, the joint United Nations and Arab League envoy to Syria, submitted on March 16 a six-point peace plan to the UN Security Council.

During talks with the Syrian government and opposition, Annan presented the plan as providing a blueprint for ending the violence and resolving the crisis sparked by a year-long uprising against Bashar al-Assad, the Syrian president.

1) commit to work with the Envoy in an inclusive Syrian-led political process to address the legitimate aspirations and concerns of the Syrian people, and, to this end, commit to appoint an empowered interlocutor when invited to do so by the Envoy;

(2) commit to stop the fighting and achieve urgently an effective United Nations supervised cessation of armed violence in all its forms by all parties to protect civilians and stabilize the country.

To this end, the Syrian government should immediately cease troop movements towards, and end the use of heavy weapons in, population centers, and begin pullback of military concentrations in and around population centers.

As these actions are being taken on the ground, the Syrian government should work with the Envoy to bring about a sustained cessation of armed violence in all its forms by all parties with an effective United Nations supervision mechanism. Similar commitments would be sought by the Envoy from the opposition and all relevant elements to stop the fighting and work with him to bring about a sustained cessation of armed violence in all its forms by all parties with an effective United Nations supervision mechanism;

(3) ensure timely provision of humanitarian assistance to all areas affected by the fighting, and to this end, as immediate steps, to accept and implement a daily two hour humanitarian pause and to coordinate exact time and modalities of the daily pause through an efficient mechanism, including at local level;

(4) intensify the pace and scale of release of arbitrarily detained persons, including especially vulnerable categories of persons, and persons involved in peaceful political activities, provide



without delay through appropriate channels a list of all places in which such persons are being detained, immediately begin organizing access to such locations and through appropriate channels respond promptly to all written requests for information, access or release regarding such persons;

(5) ensure freedom of movement throughout the country for journalists and a non-discriminatory visa policy for them;

(6) respect freedom of association and the right to demonstrate peacefully as legally guaranteed.

Further Questions

1. What steps can be taken to ensure that the Syrian government does not conduct any more targeted chemical attacks?
2. How can the Security Council enforce a ceasefire and ensure that it is kept?
3. How can the Security Council aid relief organizations that are helping Syrian civilians?
4. What can the Security Council do when reacting to the situation in Syria apart from sanctions?
5. How can consensus be built amongst the P5 nations regarding the current situation?
6. How can the UNSC work with the Arab League to end the civil war?
7. Why have past peace talks not proven to be a success?
8. How can the UNSC protect civilians during the war?

Relevant Documents

All the delegates can refer to various sources while gathering the knowledge about a certain topic or issue or rather, the history of it, but while making on the record statements it is imperative to consider a few credible sources like Reuters, State owned media of the country you represent, UN documents and reports. We will also be considering Al- Jazeera as a valid/credible source of information considering the demographics of the agenda.

Further Readings

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<https://edition.cnn.com/2013/08/27/world/meast/syria-civil-war-fast-facts/index.html>

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Syrian-Civil-War>



<https://www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/civil-war-syria>

<https://www.voanews.com/middle-east/syrian-civil-war-enters-10th-year>

<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23849587>

<https://www.cnas.org/publications/reports/a-strategy-for-ending-the-syrian-civil-war>

Timeline of Events

March 24th 2011- In response to protests, the government announces several plans such as increasing state employee's salaries, plans to lift the 48 year long emergency law, and allowing new political parties to form. A few days later, President Assad addresses his nation to talk about how the government has failed the people but does not offer concrete changes. However, a month later, the state of emergency is lifted and people are given the right to peacefully protest.

August- December 2011- However, the US imposes sanctions twice on Syria. Any Syrian government assets in the US are frozen, stopping Americans from making investments in Syria, and forbidding any oil transactions between the two countries. The European Union has also imposed sanctions on Syria and stopped the import of Syrian oil. The Arab League suspended Syria's membership, and 19 Arab League nations voted to impose economic sanctions on Syria. Turkey also decides to take measures against Syria including economic ones. The Syrian National Council was created by opposition groups in order to end the Assad regime and create a democratic government. The UN Security Council voted to put a stop to Assad's opponents and although 9 countries voted for including the US, but Russia and China vetoed this decision. By the end of the year, Syria signs a proposal by the Arab League to put an end to the violence between the government and protestors.

February 2012- The Security Council meets again to discuss the situation in Syria. Although a resolution is formed to prevent Syria's actions against anti-government demonstrators, Russia and China veto it. Multiple countries including Gulf countries and the US close their embassies in Syria. A non-binding resolution was passed by the General Assembly that endorsed the Arab



League's plan for President Assad to step down. A poll was taken country-wide in Syria for a constitutional referendum and 90% voted for.

2013- The US discovered that chemical weapons have been used in Syria on a small scale. The EU embargo on arms for rebels ends and President Obama says that they will now support the rebels and officials are seen visiting the rebels. Investigations are done in Syrian to see if the government has been utilizing chemical weapons. Syria then agrees to a Russian proposal to give up control over its chemical weapons. President Assad says he will abide by the UN Security Council resolution to eliminate their chemical weapons and it is declared that all of Syria's chemical weapon production facilities have been destroyed.

2014- A second round of peace talks to end the civil war failed. Syria has not met the minimum requirements for eliminating their storage of chemical weapons. The UNSC creates a resolution increasing humanitarian aid to Syria.

2016- Temporary truce in order for relief organizations to assist civilians. Russian forces start pulling out of Syria. The ceasefire is violated and the US and Russia accuse each other. An American airstrike kills 62 Syrian soldiers instead of ISIS and a Red Crescent warehouse is bombed but no one takes responsibility. This causes the UN to cease their aid operations in Syria. The government takes control of Aleppo after four years of it being in rebel control.

2017- Dozens of civilian deaths are once again reported due to chemical weapons. Russia says this occurred when the government bombed rebel chemical depots while activists say the government was the one who carried out the attack. In response to this, the US launches a military strike on a Syrian government airbase.

2018- US, France, and the UK all launch airstrikes in Syria due to the chemical attacks that happened in 2018. Helicopters dropped barrels of toxic gas in a rebel village.



Conclusion

Carrying on for almost 10 years, the Syrian Civil war has taken many lives on its way to political power and many countries have joined in the quest to show their powers on the international level. The Syrian Conflict accompanying the other points of unrest in the MENA region (Middle East and Northern Africa) like the issues of Israel- Palestine has brought a sense of terror in the people living here. Economies have been destroyed altogether.

A solid sustainable decision needs to be taken and thus the President of the United Nations Security Council calls for a meeting on the 3rd Of July to find solutions that are sustainable enough to maintain peace forever in the Syrian war zones

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