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United Nations Simulation Conference 2022
United Nations Security Council



Background Guide

Sr. No.	Topic	Page
1.	Letters from the Chairs	3
2.	Introduction to the Committee: a. About b. Structures and Functions c. Nature of Resolutions	4
3.	Agenda 1 - “Conflict between Russia and Ukraine” a. Introduction to the Topic b. Definition of Key Words c. History of the Agenda d. Main Issues of Concerns e. Key Parties f. Previous Actions g. Questions to Consider h. Suggested Readings i. Bibliography	6
4.	Agenda 2 - “The conflict in the Western Sahara region” a. Introduction to the Topic b. Definition of Key Words c. History of the Agenda d. Main Issues of Concerns e. Key Parties f. Previous Actions g. Questions to Consider h. Suggested Readings i. Bibliography	11

United Nations Security Council

About

A century prior to the formation of the United Nations, several international instruments attempted to alleviate conflict and resolve issues. Organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Hague conventions are a few notable examples.

Following the disasters of World War 1 (WW1), the Paris Peace Conference, also known as the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919, established The League of Nations in order to settle various disputes. However, the League of Nations was a highly flawed institution, lacked representation from most of the world and failed to prevent multiple regional conflicts as well as World War 2 (WW2).

Formed in 1945, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the UN. It was formed in the aftermath of the failure of the League of Nations and aimed to prevent another world war and other forms of conflict. In a nutshell, its primary responsibility is to ensure international peace and security. The UNSC, however, was greatly paralyzed in its early stages due to the Cold War between the US and USSR and hence failed to take constructive decisions on conflicts related to the same, but continued to deal with other issues. In 1956, the first UN peacekeeping force was established to end the Suez Crisis.

Structures and Functions

The United Nations is composed of 15 member states, 5 of which are permanent (United States, United Kingdom, Russia, China and France) and the remaining are elected by the General Assembly every 1-2 years. However, as per Article 31 of the UN Charter, any party not a member of the UNSC but that is involved in the dispute being discussed may be invited, without vote, to the meetings (the concept of observer states in a particular meeting).

As per the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council's primary function is to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations. It also plays an integral role in investigating any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction, threat to peace or an act of aggression and recommend methods of reconciling or consequential actions thereof. Among the options that the UNSC can adopt for consequential actions is the

placement of economic sanctions and other peaceful means or military aggression against an actor in certain cases. Among a few of its specific functions are the formulation of plans to regulate armaments, appointment of the Secretary General and election of judges of the International Court of Justice with the General Assembly. Article 25 of the UN Charter makes it the only UN organ whose decisions are binding and have to be carried out.

The UNSC can enforce its decisions in any ways that don't involve the use of force. According to Article 41 of the UN Charter- "The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations."

However, if despite the working of Article 41 the dispute does not resolve, then pursuant to the following article the use of armed force is permitted:

"...demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations." Such plans however, have to be made with assistance from the Military Staff Committee.

Natures of Resolutions

The UNSC treats resolutions under two main criteria:

1. Pacific Settlement of Disputes (Corresponding to Chapter VI of the UN Charter). Please make sure that you read all the articles in the chapter to understand in depth what it is about. The underlying factor in all articles of this category are that they involve no use of force, or military solutions.

Additional Provision: In case a resolution is being discussed that entirely conforms to the articles in Chapter VI of the UN Charter. An invocation of Article 27(3) of the UN Charter may be entertained. As per paragraph 3 of Article 27 [27(3)], nations which are directly involved in the conflict shall abstain from voting on resolution

2. Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace and Acts of Aggression (Corresponding to Chapter VII of the UN Charter). Please make sure that you read all the articles in the chapter to understand in depth what it is about. The underlying factor in all articles of this category are that they do involve use of measures that might not necessarily be peaceful.

Important Note: The resolutions in this committee must utilise the mandate of only the Security Council and must not go beyond it.

“Conflict between Russia and Ukraine”

Introduction

The current situation between the Russian Federation and the state of Ukraine has reached a major tipping point as Russian troops are now pouring over the borders of Russia as well as Belarus. Satellite Imagery has shown a massive buildup of the military might of the Russian Federation. The situation in Ukraine has reached dire straits as President Volodymyr Zelensky has been forced to install martial law due to the impending savage attacks on Kyiv and other major Ukrainian cities such as Kharkiv, Odessa, and Mariupol.

Although the Ukrainian forces are withholding the onslaught of attacks from Russian forces it is becoming increasingly clear that it is only a matter of time before Russian troops break through the Ukrainian defences. In order to bolster the Ukrainian defence, Zelensky has declared that all men within Ukraine aged 18 to 65 are now members of the Ukrainian military. Beyond an increase in manpower, Ukraine has also begun receiving arms shipments from various countries around the world in particular the Baltic States as well as the United States and the United Kingdom. These arms consignments are mostly consisting of the man-portable air-defence (MANPAD) launcher the Stinger as well as the next generation anti-tank launcher the NLAW. Germany along with Finland and Sweden have dispatched thousands of Javelin missile launchers, the most efficient anti-tank launchers in the world. As shipments from around the world continue to pour into Ukraine, evidence of the impact that these weapons have had on the defensive effort can be widely seen as burned-out carcasses of tanks and armoured Russian vehicles litter battlefields across the country.

Key Terms

- a. **UN Charter:** Signed on June 26, 1945, the Charter of the United Nations is the foundational treaty of the United Nations intergovernmental organisation.
- b. **Veto Power:** Is the defined authority of the P-5 to eliminate any draft resolution on the floor of the UNSC with one vote against.

c. **Permanent Member:** The five member states who have been given status of consistent membership within the UNSC.

d. **Non-Permanent Member:** Pursuant to Article 23 of the UN Charter, ten of the 15 Council members are elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms on the Security Council.

e. **Sanctions:** Sanctions are enforcement mechanisms utilised by the security council in order to further their goals. They can take the form of economic sanctions, arms embargoes, travel bans, etc.

f. **Security Council:** One of the principal organs of the UN, the Security Council has primary responsibility under the UN Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security.

g. **Peacekeeping Missions:** UN peacekeeping missions are mandated by the Security Council to provide security and political and peacebuilding support to countries in conflict or post-conflict situations. They are guided by the principles of consent of the host country, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defence, defence of the mandate or protection of civilians if so authorised by the Council.

History of Agenda

Since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 Ukraine has celebrated 30 years of independence from the control of the Soviet puppet government that was established throughout the duration of the Soviet Union. Ukraine celebrates its independence day August 24th to celebrate the overwhelming decision by the Ukrainian Parliament in which there was a vote to exit the Soviet Union with 92% of the vote going to leaving the Soviet Union.

Although Ukraine has maintained relatively neutrality as far as their involvement in the European political scape, recent advances from the Russian Federation have pushed the neutral country to request the ability to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). By joining NATO western powers such as the United States, The United Kingdom, and France would be bound by treaty to militarily support the former Soviet country in the event that a war or armed conflict were to break out. Due to the shared border between Russia and Ukraine this has led to tensions rising between the two nations, particularly since the first attempt by Ukraine to join NATO in 1992, due to Ukrainian leadership making the push to join NATO. In 2008 Ukraine requested to be granted a membership action plan after President George W.

Bush voiced support for Ukraine to be granted access and entry to NATO. However, Ukraine was ultimately denied entry after France and Germany eventually chose not to

support the membership of Ukraine in NATO after Russia voiced disdain for the invitation to NATO in 2008. Ultimately, the primary reason that Russia has shown such severe opposition to Ukraine being granted membership into NATO stems primarily from the fear of western global competitors being allowed to “set up shop” in a country that shares a border with their own. This has led to a response from western powers in recent time to station NATO troops along the border of Poland in order to protect the border of the closest neighbouring NATO member state.

In December of 2021 United States Intelligence began pickin up on traces of Russia building up troops along the Ukrainian border in preparation of an invasion of the former Soviet country. The Russian military offensive that United States intelligence has warned of could contain more than 175,000 Russian soldiers. After military exercises took place near the border of Ukraine in spring of 2021 the United States is warning of a military offensive containing twice as many soldiers as were transported to the border in early 2021. As of late 2021 and early 2022 it is expected that there are more than 100 Russian military battalions waiting for orders from the Kremlin in order to invade Ukraine. As tensions continue to rise and the threat of combat looms over the two nations in 2021 it would mark the first armed conflict to occur within Europe since the ending of World War 2 in 1945.

Main Issues of Concern

Civilian casualties and loss of structure

The war has now entered a phase where Russia’s main goal is to reduce Ukraine’s resources—weaken the economy and the army and destroy the infrastructure. The Russian Army also combines intensive battles along the front line, shelling cities, villages, and infrastructure that are outside the limits of military operations. During the war, more than 3,000 rockets were fired, which led to the death of many civilians, including children. The main goal of it is to put additional pressure on the Ukrainian population and government to weaken their resistance and encourage Kyiv to make concessions.

Rising prices for utilities, food, and rising inflation are putting pressure on western governments to determine how long their societies will be willing to send significant resources to support Ukrainians. By prolonging the war in Ukraine, the Russian authorities aim to exhaust not only the Ukrainians themselves but also their partners.

Potential for nuclear catastrophe

Russia is one of the countries that possess the most number of nuclear warheads. If they were to be used for warfare it would mean the start of another world war at the same time will affect generations of people.

The nuclear plants in Ukraine are also under threat as the missile shells come close to these plants. In the event that one of these plants were to explode, it could cause a disaster worse than Chernobyl.

Key Parties

UKRAINE

The country collectively condemns the invasion of and continuous aggression against Ukraine, its sovereignty and territorial integrity by the Russian Federation. Extremely outraged about the continuous atrocities and the resulting grave human rights and humanitarian crises, which have a massive detrimental impact on civilians' lives, safety and well-being. Demands heavy sanctions on Russian Federation as Ukraine's media and internet infrastructure may be intentionally targeted by the Russian forces in an effort to disrupt access to information, including by means of cyberattacks.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

President Biden stated that 800 US soldiers will be transferred from Italy to the Baltic region, eight F-35 fighter jets will be transferred from Germany to Eastern Europe, and that 32 Apache helicopters will be transferred. However, the president said the U.S. military would not fight Russia in Ukraine, but would defend every inch of NATO territory. On March 16, Biden announced an additional \$800 million in security assistance to Ukraine, bringing the total U.S. security assistance committed to Ukraine to \$2 billion since the start of the Biden Administration. The United States sent \$750M in additional military aid to Ukraine, including drones, howitzers and protective equipment to defend against chemical attacks. U.S. Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin ordered the deployment of about 7,000 additional troops to Europe. On February 26, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated that Ukraine would be provided with an additional \$350 million in military aid to strengthen their defence capabilities.

CHINA

China in the global response towards the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine has been described by several commentators as a position ranging from neutrality to support. China refused to condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine, repeated Russian propaganda about the war, opposed economic sanctions against Russia, and abstained or sided with Russia in UN votes on the war in Ukraine. The Chinese government has been criticised by the United States for not condemning or imposing large-scale sanctions on Russia.

RUSSIA

On February 24, 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin launched a exclusive invasion of Ukraine, sparking Europe's largest armed conflict since World War II. Putin declared that the "ultimate aim" of the Russian war in Ukraine is "the liberation of the

Donbas, the defense of its people, and the creation of conditions which would guarantee the security of Russia itself.”Russia declared that it’s aim was to protect people subjected to what he called eight years of bullying and genocide by Ukraine's government. Another objective was soon added: ensuring Ukraine's neutral status.Russia's leader refused to call it an invasion or a war.Russia is now accused by the international community of carrying out war crimes. Several countries including the US and Canada go further and call it genocide.

EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union responded quickly and decisively, backing the Ukrainian government. It has imposed the toughest sanctions to date, expanding in scope and scope as the war rages on. The Coalition provides extensive financial and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and helps fund military equipment provided by member states. EU countries have hosted nearly 5 million of ukrainian refugees so far and will keep their borders open to those fleeing conflict.The EU, together with the US, the UK, Canada, Japan and other like-minded partners and allies, have championed the international defence of Ukraine.The EU provided abundant warnings to discourage the Russian invasion and replied substantially to Russian security demands, hoping a true negotiation would ensue. The EU also reassured allies closest to the conflict with preventative deployments, the prudent - and yet firm - reaction of NATO conveys a clear message: the Alliance will not flinch in defending itself, yet it harbours no offensive intentions vis-à-vis Russia.

Previous Actions

1. On 26 April, facing a worsening crisis in Ukraine, the UN doubled its emergency appeal to \$2.24 billion. To date, the flash appeal is 86% funded. The United Nations and its partners have provided more than 8.1 million people with humanitarian assistance and protection since the beginning of the war.

Questions to Consider

I. What are effective ways that the UN Security Council can utilise funds and resources to provide aid to those whose basic human rights are being violated?

II. Are economic sanctions effective or are they inadvertently financially crippling to innocent civilians within Russia who may not support the conflict?

III. How can the UN Security Council work with pre-existing international bodies, such as NATO, to take a holistic approach to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine?

IV. Should the UN Security Council advise that neighbouring nations as well as the global west not intervene militarily in the conflict?

Suggested Readings

1. <https://news.un.org/en/focus/ukraine>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/series/russia-ukraine-war-at-a-glance>
3. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/08/ukraine-ukrainian-fighting-tactics-endanger-civilians/>
4. <https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/ukraine-russia>

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- <https://www.marsh.com/us/risks/geopolitical-risk-russia-ukraine-conflict/insights/russia-ukraine-conflict-overview-of-risk-considerations.html#supply>
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/russia-ukraine-invasion/2021/12/03/98a3760e-546b-11ec-8769-2f4ecdf7a2ad_story.html
- <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/the-russia-ukraine-conflict-a-war-of-attrition/>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/09/11/world/ukraine-russia-war>

“The conflict in the Western Sahara region”

Introduction

Western Sahara is a sparsely-populated area of mostly desert situated on the northwest coast of Africa. It is composed of the geographic regions of Río de Oro (“River of Gold”). It used to be a former Spanish colony, but in 1976 when the Spanish troops left the territory, instead of gaining independence Western Sahara was annexed by Morocco. Morocco’s invasion forced thousands of refugees into the Algerian desert. Since then Western Sahara has been the subject of a long-running territorial dispute. According to the EU Foreign Policy Chief, Federica Mogherini, “Western Sahara status remains that of a non-self-governing territory. According to the United Nations documents Western Sahara has been on the United Nations list of Non-Self Governing Territories since 1963. Morocco claims Western Sahara on the grounds that a few Sahrawi tribes once pledged their allegiance to the Sultan of Morocco. Although the ICJ recognizes legal ties between Morocco and some Sahrawi tribes they concluded that there was no tie of territorial sovereignty between Western Sahara and Morocco and that the people of Western Sahara have the right to self-determination.

The UN’s involvement in the Western Sahara issue started on December 16, 1965, when the General Assembly adopted its first resolution on what was then called Spanish Sahara, requesting Spain to “take all necessary measures” to decolonize the territory, while entering into negotiations on “problems relating to sovereignty.” Between 1966 and 1973 the General Assembly adopted seven more resolutions on the territory, all of which reiterated the need to hold a referendum on self-determination. Thus, the UN stated in unambiguous terms from the start that the Western Sahara conflict could be resolved only through an act of self-determination, in keeping with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This position has been maintained by the organisation up to the present day.

Key Terms

- a. **Polisario Front:** A politico-military organisation striving to end Moroccan control of the former Spanish territory of Western Sahara and win independence for that region

- b. **Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR):** A self-declared state claiming authority over the disputed territory of Western Sahara, which is presently occupied by Morocco, declared by the Polisario Front (one day after Spanish withdrawal in 1976)
- c. **Green March:** King Hassan, after a UN mission had reported that the majority of Saharans wanted independence and had recommended self-determination for the region, he responded with the “Green March” in which approximately 200.000 volunteers were sent unarmed across the border to claim Spanish Sahara
- d. **Madrid Accords:** A treaty between Spain, Morocco and Mauritania aiming to end the Spanish presence in the territory of the Spanish Sahara
- e. **Referendum:** A vote in which all people in a country or an area are asked to give their opinion about or decide an important political or social question
- f. **Sovereignty:** The power of a country to control its own government, and to make its own decisions, without any interference from outside sources or bodies.
- g. **Exile:** The condition of someone being sent or kept away from their own country, village, etc., especially for political reasons

History of Agenda

Western Sahara is at the centre of an ongoing conflict between Morocco, which controls the region, and the Polisario Front, which believes Western Sahara should be an independent state. The conflict has led to numerous battles between the Polisario Front and the Moroccan army.

The current conflict began in 1975 when thousands of Moroccan citizens flanked by Moroccan forces invaded Western Sahara against Spain, which had ruled the region since 1884. Fearing a protracted military conflict and facing Spain's own internal problems, Spain agreed to give the northern part of its colony to Morocco and the southern part to Mauritania. Neither Mauritania nor Morocco recognizes the Sahara as sovereign, and in 1975 the Polisario Front launched a guerrilla war to expel the Moroccan and Mauritanian forces and establish the SADR as an independent state. Mauritania withdrew from the region in 1978 and Morocco took control of the

remaining territory. Despite the 1991 ceasefire that ended the armed conflict, Western Sahara continues to remain an area of conflict.

Today Morocco controls most of Western Sahara, including the Atlantic coast. A wall, fortified with a moat and protected by troops, effectively cuts off the Polisario territory from the coast, making the area to the east almost uninhabitable. Because of this, many Saharans were expelled and Polisario and his SADR government are now operating outside Algeria.

Although Morocco claims western Sahara to be theirs, the United Nations has designated Western Sahara as a "non-autonomous area" and has taken a position that supports the self-determination of the people.

Main Issues of Concerns

Feuding new tensions between Algeria and Morocco

The most alarming element of the standoff is the resumption of fighting in Western Sahara and the possibility that Algeria and Morocco could come into direct conflict. Polisario ended the ceasefire in reaction to Morocco's incursion into the buffer zone, but its move also responded to a longer-term impatience among younger Polisario fighters who were frustrated by the failure of diplomacy to achieve results. Since then, the conflict has remained at a low level of intensity.

Any direct military exchanges between Algeria and Morocco would bring two of Africa's largest military forces into conflict. An arms race between the two rivals is already under way, and both have ties to advanced weapons manufacturers.

Conflict risks spilling over into the Sahel

In a worst-case scenario, unchecked violence between Morocco and Polisario could spill over into neighbouring countries and further destabilise the Sahara-Sahel region. Which could cause a domino effect that could lead the conflict into other parts of the continent.

Key Parties

Morocco:

Since 1975, when Spain, the region's former colonial administration, vacated the area, the majority of Western Sahara has been governed by Morocco. In order to get ready for a vote on self-determination, Morocco and the Polisario, the liberation movement for Western Sahara, consented to a truce mediated by the UN in 1991. That referendum was never held. Morocco opposes calls for a vote on self-determination that would allow for the option of independence because it sees Western Sahara as a vital component of the monarchy.

Sahrawi Republic:

The Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), also known as the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic or the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, is a self-proclaimed state claiming authority over the disputed territory of Western Sahara currently occupied by Morocco. SADR's independence has been recognized by about 80 countries at various times, although some have withdrawn or suspended its recognition since the mid-1990s.

In 1984, the SADR was approved by the African Union 1984 with the support of Algeria and Libya, and Morocco seceded from the continent. Morocco rejoined in 2017, but SADR remains a member of the African Union.

Algeria:

Algeria announced on June 8 that it would immediately withdraw its 20-year-old pact with Spain, citing "friendship, friendship and cooperation". Relations that had been beneficial to both countries took a hit after Spain decided to change its stance on the Western Sahara conflict.

Recent occurrences have prompted a fresh escalation. In order to make significant progress on the Western Sahara issue and to bolster its position in the area during the past four years, Morocco has taken advantage of Algeria's internal crises and diplomatic slowness. Morocco's re-admission to the African Union in 2017 encouraged this. The opening of consulates in the disputed territory of Western Sahara, policy changes in some African and Arab states in favour of Rabat and President Donald Trump's recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over the region have all added to Algerian officials' frustration.

Spain:

Spain's official position for years has been to back a UN-sponsored referendum to settle the region's decolonization. Even Spain's standing as a former colonial power, the country has always been expected to maintain a semblance of neutrality on the matter.

However, Spain siding with Morocco publicly and expressing support for limited autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty has disrupted the delicate balance of power in the region.

United States of America:

Although Morocco has been a strategic ally of the US since the end of the Cold War, US policymakers are less concerned about the Western Sahara crisis than they are about other global conflicts. However, Morocco continues to see the United States as the most significant external participant in the Western Sahara dispute. Numerous insights about American policy toward Morocco can be gained from the way the country has handled the Western Sahara dispute over the past 30 years. The United States has approached the disagreement in a number of ways. Early on, it played a key role diplomatically in pressing Spain to meet Rabat's demands and accept the Madrid Treaty whereby Spain ceded the Sahara to Morocco in 1975. Since 1977 it has adopted a neutral stance toward the issue.

France:

France is committed to good relations between its European partners and its southern Mediterranean neighbours. In dialogue, we can overcome common challenges. France's position on Western Sahara is unshakable. We support a just, durable and mutually acceptable political solution in line with UN Security Council resolutions. In this regard, Morocco's autonomy plan is a serious and credible basis for discussion.

Previous Actions

Resolution 1871

Adopted by the Security Council at its 6117th meeting, on 30 April 2009

This resolution renewed the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 30 April 2010, welcomed the parties' agreement to hold small, informal talks in preparation for a fifth round of negotiations and called on them to continue to show political will to enter into a "more intensive and substantive phase of negotiations".

Resolution 1920

Adopted by the Security Council at its 6305th meeting, on 30 April 2010

This resolution renewed the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 30 April 2011, the Secretary-General urged both parties to the dispute, Morocco and Frente Polisario, to continue to negotiate in good faith and without any preconditions under the auspices of his personal envoy Christopher Ross.

Resolution 2152

Adopted by the Security Council at its 7162nd meeting, on 29 April 2014

This resolution extended the mandate of MINURSO for a year and supported the Secretary-General's request for an additional 15 military observers, within existing resources.

Questions to consider

- I. How does the stance of the UNSC on Western Sahara differ from other land disputes, current or otherwise? What details are similar?
- II. How is the UNSC working to implement measures to resolve the conflict between Morocco and the people of the Western Sahara?
- III. How will the next round of negotiation held by the UNSC possibly change the current scenario of the conflict?

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