

# Security Council

## **Israel-Palestine: Human Rights and Regional Escalation**

As of Oct. 7, 2023, the world's attention has turned to the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. After over three months, the future of the conflict remains unclear. There are serious fears that conflict will spread to the entire Middle East and could entangle the United States itself in the ongoing war. The US right away sent aircraft carriers to the region as a precautionary act and on January 29 three American soldiers were killed in an attack on an American military base in Jordan, near the borders of Syria. Iran is accused of supporting Hamas. The Lebanese front is already involved as Hezbollah, the Iran-backed militia, reacted to the events by opening a new front in Southern Lebanon. Another front is the Red Sea where the Houthis (Iran's allies) are targeting ships going to Israel in order to support the Palestinians. The US has formed an international coalition and started bombing Yemen to secure safety for shipping in the Red Sea.

Another major challenge revolves around human rights. Millions of Palestinians who live in Gaza need food, water, and medical aid. Israel has laid siege to Gaza and is monitoring any supplies that might enter the strip. Senior UN leaders and a majority of humanitarian organizations have warned of starvation and lack of medical supplies and shortage of functioning hospitals. The situation is dire. South Africa has filed a case with the International Court of Justice accusing Israel of committing genocide and cutting off food, water and medical supplies to the besieged Palestinians. Israel and its allies denied those accusations and argue that Israel is defending itself against the terrorist attacks of October 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Here are few questions to help guide the discussion:**

- Are the fears of the conflict spreading real? If so, what could be done to prevent the conflict from spiraling out of control?
- Should the US and other governments intervene militarily?
- Did the military campaign in Yemen secure shipping or aggravate the situation?
- What could the UN do?
- Should the Security Council intervene to provide the Palestinians with their humanitarian needs? If so, why hasn't the Security Council acted yet?
- Moving beyond accusations and the immediate calls for a ceasefire, is there a reasonable solution to the conflict? Can you think of any solutions/proposals that are acceptable for both parties?
- Is it important to evaluate how history influences the conflict and what is the most likely solution?

## **Terrorism in Africa (Boko Haram)**

Several African countries are experiencing severe security and economic crises. Instability in the region is common and has many causes. Terrorism is one of these causes (or maybe a symptom of deeper causes). One terrorist organization in particular has become the most dangerous in central Africa. This organization is known as Boko Haram, which is an Islamic extremist group that has terrorized central Africa since 2002. In more recent times they have claimed allegiance to The Islamic State previously known as ISIS. Many people believe it is time for some form of intervention. This conflict involves issues of state sovereignty, religion, and politics. In moving towards a solution, it is important to consider all these aspects and the views of people native to the region. The rise of terrorist groups such as Boko Haram creates several social and governmental instabilities in the region. Unspeakable atrocities may occur if terrorist organizations successfully overpower the state or take control of governmental institutions.

### **Here are few questions to help guide the discussion:**

- What will occur if state institutions fail to contain these groups?
- What measures can UN member states take to combat rebel terrorist groups?
- Could African nations on their own handle this particular terrorist organization or do we need some form of an international coalition authorized by the UN
- Would a full UN military intervention affect stability in the region? How?

## **Cybersecurity**

Cybersecurity is a new threat that has grown and evolved in recent years. Cyberattacks have increased globally by more than 13% with a global estimate of 800,000 attacks per year. According to the World Economic Forum “global cost of online criminal acts are expected to surge to \$23.84 trillion by 2027, up from \$8.44 trillion in 2022, according to data from Statista, the FBI and IMF.” Cybercrime, while different from cyberattacks, still poses a significant threat.

Most nations are diligently working to build up their defenses against both types of threats to cybersecurity, however they require money and resources that are not readily available to all member nations. The development and integration of innovative technology and AI into government and citizen daily usage raises the overall risk and potential consequences of these attacks. Cybersecurity is a modern issue with many elements that countries must manage diligently. As UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres observed at the Munich Security Conference in 2018, “The United Nations [is] ready to be a platform in which different actors could come together and discuss the way forward, in order to find the adequate approaches to make sure that we are able to deal with the problem of cybersecurity.”

### **Members nations should consider the following questions:**

- Are cyberattacks and cyberterrorism the future of warfare? How could this influence international law?
- How could a major cyberattack affect UN member nations? What preemptive steps can the UN take?
- What are the humanitarian implications of large-scale cyberattacks? What can the UN do to address humanitarian consequences?
- What role does the UN have in preventing cybercrime? Does the UN have a role in addressing the economic consequences of cybercrime?

# Historical Security Council

## League of Nations and the Great Depression

Starting in 1929, most countries faced a severe and devastating economic depression, which later became known as the Great Depression. It began in September of 1929 and culminated with the October 24 Wall Street Market Crash. This period was characterized by failing economies, high levels of unemployment, soaring inflation and a decrease in quality of life around the world. Although the cause is not known for sure, the leading theory states it was caused by a reduction in market confidence leading to a reduction in investments and consumption. Many scholars believe that this crisis was a major cause of the rise of Nazism and Fascism and contributed to the Second World War. As the League of Nations Assembly, it is your responsibility to come together and draft resolutions that presents solutions to this problem.

### **Here are few points to help guide the discussion:**

- The Debate is taking place in late 1930 and unanimity is required for all important decisions.
- Discuss how trade can play a role in the crisis, investigate the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930 and how similar laws can lead to trade wars.
- Discuss potential solutions for this crisis and try to draft a resolution that can begin to undo the damage caused by the stock market crash.
- Research how your nation and region was specifically affected by the Great Depression and keep this is mind during the debate.

## **League of Nations and Japanese militarism**

After WWI, Japan's military forces have become more and more powerful. Their desire to acquire badly needed natural resources and the rise of Japanese radical nationalism were major causes that drove Japan to invade China. China at that time suffered from internal divisions and civil wars.

Japan began its incursions into Manchuria in 1931, using an explosion on the South Manchurian Railway near Mukden as a pretext. The conflict escalated and Chinese forces, split between the KMT and CPC were unable to hold off the superior Japanese forces. The Japanese soldiers killed between 300,000 and 400,000 Chinese civilians but some scholars present even much higher numbers. This massacre caused a real scare in China. Many historians reported that Japanese soldiers committed sexual violence against Chinese women.

The situation escalated significantly as Japan still needed more natural resources to build its empire. The League of Nations sent an investigating committee called the Lytton Commission, which issued a report in September 1932. This debate in the League Assembly is taking place following the release of that report and decisions must be unanimous.

### **Questions to consider:**

- Could the League of Nations have intervened to prevent Japan from invading China? If not, why?
- Should the League of Nations intervene now to protect Chinese sovereignty against Japanese aggression? What should it do?
- Would it be possible to unite China's military forces to fight against Japan?
- What are the limitations of the League of Nations?
- Should Japan and China be left to fend for themselves? What could be the consequences of unchecked Japanese militarism?
- Should other countries show some understanding for Japan's desire to build an empire (just like the British, the French, the Russian Empires)?

## **European Union**

## **Climate Change and Renewable Energy**

Household electricity prices increased in 22 EU countries in the first half of 2023 compared with the first half of 2022. Additionally, gas prices climbed in 20 out of the 24 EU member nations. Overall, energy costs were highest in the Netherlands, Belgium, Romania, and Germany. The rising energy costs have affected the poorest of member nations, and are affecting average European families.

In light of the unprecedented rise in energy prices, climate change needs to be addressed. Extreme weather events have cost member nations collectively more than \$487 billion in financial losses and damages. Forest fires are raging within Germany and other member nations, costing annually \$2 billion dollars and rising. An estimated 198,000 Europeans have lost their lives as a result of extreme weather from 1998-2020.

Serious efforts must be taken to offset the extreme weather that costs lives and impacts member nations. One of several initiatives is the use of nuclear energy in France. Furthermore, Sweden is on track to reach their 2040 goal of being fossil fuel free by using a combination of wind, bio energy, solar, and *body heat*.

**To understand the gravity of the situation and possible solutions, think of the following questions:**

- Which form of renewable energy is most effective?
- Which forms of renewable energy are most affordable?
- How can EU countries come together to solve this crisis?
- What will happen to the people in these countries if the cost of energy does not decrease?
- What long-term environmental issues will the EU face if action isn't taken?
- What can be done to mitigate weather events while transitioning towards renewable energies?
- What short-term goals can be met to achieve small solutions?
- How can extreme weather be prevented by infrastructure?
- What will be done with fossil fuel burning plants going forward?

## **Humanitarian Aid and Refugees from Ukraine and the Middle East**

As of 2024, there are a total of 110 million people who have been forcibly displaced for a multitude of reasons including persecution, conflict, human rights, and economic instability. One major recent event that has caused an influx of refugees is the Russian invasion of Ukraine. As a result, there has been a total of 6 million people fleeing all across Europe. Over 900,000 refugees from Ukraine have received

temporary protection in Germany, as it is the third largest refugee-hosting country in the world. Additionally, conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa have created massive refugee flows increasing since the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011. Despite the high number of refugees, the EU has placed a limit on the number of refugees that can be taken in.

**Here are few questions to help guide the discussion:**

- What are the immediate needs of refugees?
- How will refugees be accounted for?
- How will refugees be integrated, and under what conditions will refugees return?
- What resources can be allotted towards refugees?
- What measures can be taken to limit the number of refugees?
- How do nativist and populist policies in host countries prevent the acceptance of refugees?
- What are the cultural ramifications that the host countries might experience as a result of the rise in the number of refugees?
- What will be done with further refugees when the cap is reached?
- Do EU countries have legal/political/moral obligations to receive refugees?
- Does the identity or religion or ethnicity or nationality of the refugee matter?