



Podar Model United Nations 2014
United Nations Security Council
Study Guide

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Agenda for Day 1: The crisis in Crimea-Ukraine

Crimea

The Russian Empire annexed the territory of Crimea in the last quarter of the 18th century, after a number of bloody wars with the Ottoman Empire.

The majority of those living in Crimea today are ethnic Russians – almost 1,200,000 or around 58.3 percent of the population, according to the last national census conducted back in 2001. Some 24 percent are Ukrainians (around 500,000) and 12 percent are Crimean Tatars.

In 1954, a controversial decision of Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, himself an ethnic Ukrainian, transferred the Crimea peninsula to the Ukrainian SSR, extracting it from Russian territory.

In 1948, Sevastopol, Crimea's largest city, was separated from the surrounding region and made directly subordinate to Moscow. Serving as an important Soviet naval base, it remained a "*closed city*" for years.

Following negotiations, the city with the surrounding territories was granted a special "*state significance*" status within the Ukrainian state, and some of the naval facilities were leased to Russia for its Black Sea Fleet until at least 2047. However, the city's Russian majority and some outspoken Russian politicians still consider it to be a part of Russia.

How did the conflict between Ukraine and Crimea begin?

The conflict arising in Ukraine today stems from the Ukrainian president, Viktor Yanukovich's rejection of a single economic deal with the European Union regarding an association agreement. The interests driving this proposed agreement were quite straightforward. The EU sought more Eastern European economies to enter into their trade agreements, while Ukrainians yearned for further involvement with Western Europe's more modern and productive economies.

When the deal was being considered late last year, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich began to capriciously voice doubts in the final stages about signing the EU's proposed association agreement. For Ukrainians, their president's waffling was a clear signal that he was caving to pressure from President Vladimir Putin of Russia to reject the EU's proposed deal. A few days later, President Yanukovich outright rejected the EU proposal, accepting a new deal from Russia in the form of \$15 billion in aid and other economic benefits.

President Yanukovich's retreat beneath the wings of Russia immediately incited the ire of many Ukrainians. For years, Ukrainians have sought economic reform that would bring the country's economy in line with the economies of more prosperous Western countries. President Yanukovich's rejection of the EU proposal not only ignored the views of a majority of Ukrainians but signaled the government's strengthened alignment with Russia.

Within hours of the EU proposal's rejection, thousands of protesters stormed the streets of Kiev (the capital of Ukraine) to renew their cry for economic reform and voice their opposition to the president's decision, calling for his immediate resignation.

In response to the protesters (opposition), the Ukrainian government began to carry out aggressive action. Riot police, armed guards, and military personnel quickly descended on protest sites throughout Ukraine in order to shut down the opposition.

In mid-February, the death toll from the protests in Kiev rose sharply into the hundreds. Talks of a resolution between opposition leaders and President Viktor Yanukovich appeared less and less likely. On Feb. 21, protesters overtook the capital and the president's residence. President Viktor Yanukovich quickly fled to Russia, fearing for his life, while also facing charges from the opposition for the killing of protesters.

President Yanukovich's retreat essentially rattled the cage of the bear, waking Russia up to the fact that their political influence over Ukraine was dwindling. Russia, however, has viewed the protests as an illegitimate threat to the Ukrainian president's power that must be quashed. Russia has a significant interest in helping President Viktor Yanukovich stay in power, and in curbing any sort of democratic political reform that would align Ukraine more with Europe and less with Russia. After the opposition had completely taken control of Kiev, unmarked guards began appearing on the Ukrainian-Russian border. Russian President Vladimir Putin also called for a military drill involving over 100,000 troops, many of whom were situated by the Ukrainian border. President Putin's deliberate show of force sent the message that Russia was prepared to go to war with Ukraine.

Following the initial movements of Russian aggression, the unmarked soldiers quickly began to enter the Ukrainian province of Crimea.

What is the situation now?

Russia has now gained full control of the Crimean province and is continuing to maintain a militaristic occupation of Ukraine's military installations in the area, arguing that they are protecting their own interests within the region from the political instability of the nation. President Putin has also received parliamentary approval to send more troops toward Ukraine, a development that has sent waves of panic throughout the global community. The possible Russian annexation of Crimea has moved Russian and Ukrainian forces closer and closer to violent conflict.

The conflict within Ukraine has created a political schism, where some of the eastern parts of Ukraine have come out as sympathetic to the Russians and against reform. Clashes have begun to ensue across the country between them and the opposition forces that now control the country.

Currently, Russia has cut off all gas supplies to Ukraine, while Ukraine signed an association agreement with the EU on 27th June.

Russia's involvement

Russia had (and continues to have) legitimate fears about the economic blowback it would endure if Ukraine signed an association agreement with the EU. This kind of agreement would translate to a massive influx of high-quality, low-priced European products into Ukraine. Some of these products would inevitably end up in Russia and would not be subject to tariffs due to Ukraine and Russia's free-trade agreements.

In addition, the Cold War may be over, but Russian sentiments regarding its regional supremacy very much live on. With the recent Sochi Olympics, and this year's G8 Summit also slated to take place in Sochi, Russia was poised for a steady stream of positive publicity on the global stage. An economic deal between the EU and Ukraine would severely undercut the image of Russia as a formidable world power (at least in Putin's view).

USA's Involvement

The US gives full support to the bloody crackdown against protesters in East Ukraine. The State Department spokesperson said: "We continue to call for groups who have jeopardized public order by taking up arms and seizing public buildings in violation of Ukrainian law to disarm and leave the buildings they have seized."

President Obama recently announced economic sanctions against Russia, which was backed up by other Western countries.

The U.S. and the EU have slapped travel bans and asset freezes on members of Russian President Vladimir Putin's inner circle and threatened to impose more crippling sanctions against entire sectors of Russia's economy if the Kremlin fails to de-escalate the crisis.

EU's Involvement

The entire crisis began when President Viktor Yanukovych turned down a deal with the EU to improve trade.

The EU leaders recently said Russia and the rebels should take steps to ease the violence, including releasing all captives, retreating from border checkpoints, agreeing on a way to verify the cease-fire and launching "substantial negotiations" on Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko's peace plan.

Ukraine signed a free-trade pact with the EU in June, the very deal that a former Ukrainian president dumped under pressure from Moscow in November, fueling huge protests that eventually drove him from power. Moscow responded by annexing the mainly Russian-speaking Crimean Peninsula in March, and a pro-Russian insurgency in eastern Ukraine erupted the month after, leading to the developments that have brought Russia-West relations to their lowest point since the Cold War times

The British Foreign Secretary William Hague said he was "deeply concerned" at the escalation of tensions and the decision of the Russian parliament to authorise military action. He also said "This action is a potentially grave threat to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We condemn any act of aggression against Ukraine".

The French representative of the Ministry Of Foreign Affairs, Romen Nadal, expressed his concerns on events in Crimea and reminded the foreign minister Laurent Fabius repeatedly called upon to preserve the unity and integrity of Ukraine.

Other countries involved:

Pakistan- Foreign Ministry spokesperson Tasnim Aslam, in a weekly press briefing, expressed hope that the political crisis in Ukraine would be resolved through peaceful means and stated that talks and diplomacy were the only option to calm down the situation.

Syria- President Bashar Al Assad expressed support for Putin's efforts to "restore security and stability in the friendly country of Ukraine."

Turkey- Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu stated on 28 February that "Turkey attaches importance to democracy and democracy-based political stability in Ukraine's future" and that "Crimea is important for Turkey as it is Turkey's door to Ukraine and it is also important for our Tatar compatriots." Turkish President Abdullah Gul stated on 5 March that the problems must be solved within international law and with respect to Ukraine's political union and borders.

China- China has adopted a cautious response to the crisis, not wanting either to alienate key ally Russia or comment directly on the referendum in which Crimea voted overwhelmingly to join Russia, lest it set a precedent for its own restive regions, like Tibet. But China has also said it would like to continue to develop "friendly cooperation" with Ukraine and that it respects the ex-Soviet state's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

For a detailed and updated timeline on the crisis: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26248275>

Guiding Questions:

1. What is the relationship between your country and Russia/Ukraine?
2. How is your country affected by the crisis in Ukraine?
3. Based to your foreign policy, which side are you on? Rebels or the government?
4. To what extent is your country involved in the crisis?

6. What can your country offer to help solve this crisis?

Agenda for Day 2: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

An Introduction

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is older than the United Nations itself. It has a long, controversial history, which is too broad in scope to cover in a single background guide- that is the subject of entire books. The purpose of this guide is not to describe the conflict in its entirety, but to provide a starting point for research by introducing key terms, events, and participants, thus enabling delegates to focus on the key issues underlying this drawn-out conflict with a relative amount of ease.

Background

Prior to World War I, and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, in April 1920 the Allied Supreme Council granted to Britain the mandates of Palestine and Transjordan (present day Israel, Jordan, West Bank, and the Gaza Strip). British policies greatly affected the events that followed prior to this.

Following World War II and the horrors of the Holocaust, in 1947 the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 181, which called for the creation of two separate Jewish and Arab states. The UN partition plan for the two states is illustrated in Image 1.



Image 1.

Israel declared itself an independent state in May 1948, and the next day Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq attempted to invade. Israel was able to repel the invasion, and defeated the Palestinian militias and Arab armies. This in turn, created a large influx of Palestinian refugees, nearing 700,000 in number. The UN partition promised 56 percent of British Palestine for the Jewish state; by the end of the war, Israel possessed 77 percent- everything except the West Bank and the eastern quarter of Jerusalem (controlled by Jordan), as well as the Gaza Strip (controlled by Egypt). Thus, the Palestinians were left without a state.

In the present-day, there are over 7 million Palestinian refugees, i.e. the people displaced after the Nakba^[3] in 1948, and their descendents. A highlight of Palestinian demands in peace negotiations is a form of justice for these refugees, mostly in the form of the "right of return" to their original settlements that were abandoned in 1948.

Israel cannot accept the right of return without abandoning either its Jewish or democratic identity. Adding 7 million Arabs to Israel's population would consequently make Jews a minority- Israel's population sums up to approximately 8 million, including the 1.5 million Arabs within the state. As a result, Israel refuses to consider including the right to return in any final status deal.

Today, the peace process revolves around negotiations between Israeli leaders, led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Palestinian leaders, led by President Mahmoud Abbas. Within Israel, however, Netanyahu faces conflicting pressures from his own political party, opposing political parties, and Israeli citizens. Within Palestine, President Abbas is the

recognized leader, but another group, Hamas, control a part of Palestine called the Gaza Strip. Although there are two sides to the conflict, both sides consist of several international players with opinions of their own.

As part of the larger international conflict between Israelis and Arabs, the Palestinian situation has traditionally been a 'fuse' that ignites regional conflict. It has become especially contentious and violent in recent years. The conflict itself is rooted in the primary question of whether the Palestinian people should be allowed to form their own independent country and the government that is currently part of the nation of Israel. The territory in question has changed hands numerous times throughout history. Due to its impact on the global economic stability and security in relation to global oil demand and needs, the United States and the international community have made attempts in recent years to broker a solution to the conflict. Yet, a resolution remains elusive as to the respective claims of the Palestinians and Israelis.

The West Bank

The West Bank is situated east of Israel, and is home to 500,000 Israelis, and approximately 2.6 million Palestinians. Post the Six Day War in 1967, a victorious Israel took the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and has since allowed Jewish settlers to move in, but Palestinians (and a considerable amount of the international community) consider it illegally occupied Palestinian land. A map illustrating the West Bank is shown below in Image 2.



Image 2.

The border between Israel and the West Bank would have to change in any peace deal. Due to the 500,000 Jewish settlers living close to the border of Israel proper in the West Bank, this task is made all the more cumbersome. No set of Israeli or Palestinian leaders have agreed on precisely where the border should be drawn to date, and thus, no 'land swaps' have occurred.

The Gaza Strip

Mostly surrounded by Israel, Gaza is a very densely populated strip of land, comprising almost wholly of Palestinians. It is mostly surrounded by Israel, and is currently under Israeli blockade post their withdrawal in 2005 after the second Intifada. A map of the Gaza Strip is displayed in



Image 3.

Hamas

Hamas is the Palestinian Sunni Islamic political organisation and militant group that governs the Gaza Strip. It has a military wing, known as the Izz ad-Din Al-Qassam Brigades. Since June 2007, Hamas has governed the Gaza Strip since 2007 independently of the Palestinian Authority, but in recent times has improved relations with the PA, causing a considerable amount of concern within the international community, especially among those on the side of the Israelis.

Hamas' charter calls above all, for the destruction of Israel, even though it does not recognize it's legitimacy. It has lead conflict against Israel since the 1990s via suicide bombings, but in recent years it has shifted to rockets and mortars as it's weapons of choice. It also offers a great deal of social services for the Palestinian people, as an alternative to deeply corrupt Palestinian Authority institutions.

In 2006, Hamas won a slight majority of the seats in the Palestinian Authority legislative elections. But Hamas refused to accept previous deals that the PA had made with Israel, leading

it to de facto secede from the PA and to govern Gaza independently from the West Bank-based PLO.

Unity talks between Hamas and the PLO have broken down repeatedly. This means there is no unified Palestinian authority, complicating peace talks significantly. However, this may have changed on April 23rd, 2014 when Hamas and the PA agreed to form a shared government within five weeks and hold elections in six months.


The Conflict in 2014










On 8 July 2014, an escalation of the Gaza–Israel conflict began when Israel launched 'Operation Protective Edge' in the Palestinian unity-governed Gaza Strip. The stated aim was to stop rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip, which several non-Hamas affiliated groups had engaged in launching in June in response to an Israeli crackdown on Hamas members in the West Bank. After an Israeli Air Force airstrike killed 7 Hamas members, Hamas itself fired rockets into Israel.

On 13 July, the Israeli military reported that more than 1,300 Israeli air strikes had taken place on Gaza, while more than 800 rockets had been fired from Gaza into Israel. Several attempts to arrange a cease-fire between the two sides failed, and several arranged cease-fires (including one on 5 August, during which all Israeli soldiers were withdrawn from the Gaza Strip) fell apart or expired, before an Egyptian proposal for a 72-hour ceasefire was accepted by Israeli and Palestinian officials on 10 August.

The conflict is the deadliest military operation to have taken place in Gaza since the Second Intifada, though both the exact number of deaths and the percentage of the dead who were militants as opposed to civilians have been in dispute. The Israel Defense Forces have stated that Hamas has used civilians as "human shields"; Hamas has stated that it does not use human shields. 44% of the territory of the Gaza Strip has been declared a no-go zone by the Israeli military.

Hamas among the International Community

Country	Designation
	The military wing of Hamas, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, is

Australia	listed as a terrorist organization.
 Canada	Under the Anti-Terrorism Act, Hamas is described as a terrorist organization.
 European Union	Hamas has been included in the black list of EU-designated terrorists groups since 2003.
 Israel	The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that “Hamas maintains a terrorist infrastructure in Gaza and the West Bank, and acts to carry out terrorist attacks in the territories and Israel.”
 Japan	Stated in 2005 that it had frozen the assets of “terrorist organizations, including... Hamas.”
 Jordan	Banned Hamas in 1999 Now seeking to resettle Hamas leadership in Jordan.
 Norway	Norway was the first Western country to recognize the 2007 Palestinian government consisting of both Hamas and Fatah, and Norwegian officials have met with Hamas representatives on several occasions. “We know that the USA and the EU have legal obligations since they have Hamas on their terrorist list. We must be able to take an independent decision about contact,” Norwegian foreign minister Jonas Gahr Støre responded to a 2006 United States’ attempt to dissuade Norwegian contact with Hamas.
 Russia	Russia does not designate Hamas a terrorist organisation, and held direct talks with Hamas in 2006, after Hamas won the Palestine elections, stating that it did so to press Hamas to reject violence and recognise Israel. An Israeli official has said that Russia will reduce its ties to Hamas.
 Turkey	The Turkish government met with Hamas leaders in February 2006, after the organization’s victory in the Palestinian elections. In 2010, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan described Hamas as “resistance fighters who are struggling to defend their land.”
 United Kingdom	The Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades have been listed as a terrorist organization under the Terrorism Act since 2001. As a consequence of listing by the EU on 12 September 2003, the UK Government listed Hamas as a whole as a terrorist organization on 22 September 2003.

Questions to consider +Links to reference sources

The conflict between Israel-Palestine has never been easy to understand. Therefore, in order to make your task as delegates easier, you have been provided with a list of questions, reference links, and prompts, in the hope that you will use them all to the fullest and the debate concerning this agenda will run smoothly on day-2.

Guiding Questions

- 1) What is the relationship between your country and Israel/ Palestine? Which relationship is stronger than the other?
- 2) What have been done in the past to solve this issue? Were they successful?
- 3) Which are the countries more involved in the issue than others?
- 4) How is this conflict affecting your country? Is your country willing to directly be involved in this conflict (send in troops, arrange conferences, etc.)?
- 5) Does your country have the power to take part in this conflict to a great extent? What are the stances of your allies? What are the stances of your enemies?
- 6) What is your country's stand on the organisation, Hamas?
- 7) Do Palestinian refugees live in your country?

Links for further reference

<http://www.vox.com/cards/israel-palestine/iran-turkey-saudi-arabia>

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/dave-cohen/israel-palestine-gaza_b_2169928.html

<http://www.cracked.com/funny-5042-israeli-palestinian-conflict/>

<http://www.vox.com/2014/7/17/5902177/9-questions-about-the-israel-palestine-conflict-you-were-too>

<http://america.aljazeera.com/topics/topic/issue/israeli-palestinian-conflict.html>

