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UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE BACKGROUND GUIDE TRITONMUN XXVII – APRIL 27-28TH, 2024 MODEL UNITED NATIONS AT UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

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Hello Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Special Political & Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL)! My name is Stone Henderson and I will be your head chair. I am a fourth year at UCSD in Eleanor Roosevelt College and majoring in International Studies - Political Science with a minor in Japanese. Apart from MUN, I love both watching and participating in motorsport as well as playing games like Hell Divers 2 and Mario Kart. I have been involved with MUN for 3 years, while that may not be a very long time it has been a very productive time. I started my MUN experience at UCSD Model UN where I am currently serving as the Secretary-General of our first-ever collegiate-level conference.

As someone who has spent plenty of time studying the UN and its countless different attempts to maintain peace using the current system of peacekeepers, I am eager to see the ideas that you all will bring forth on how to reform the peacekeepers. The UN has tried to reform the peacekeeper operations before and has failed to come to a solution that would be agreed upon. Overall, I am looking forward to seeing your innovative proposals. Not only am I someone who (perhaps too much) enjoys talking about the UN and international politics, but I also love talking about space both fictional and non-fictional. As the 35th president of the United States, John F. Kennedy once said "We have vowed that we shall not see space filled with weapons of mass destruction, but with instruments of knowledge and understanding.". I find President Kennedy's quote very summative of what I hope to see accomplished in this committee. Not arming ourselves to the teeth in an attempt to gain superiority over one another, but to use the final frontier as a way to further ourselves as a society.

Sincerely,

Stone Henderson

He/Him | TritonMUN XXVII SPECPOL Head Chair | sthender@ucsd.edu

## VICE CHAIR LETTER

Distinguished Delegates,

Hello and welcome to the United Nations Special Political & Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL). I am your vice chair, Faisal El-Khouri. I am a first year at UCSD in Warren College majoring in Math-Computer Science, and I'm an international student from Jordan. When I'm not in a conference, you can find me listening to rock music and biking around campus. I spent all 4 of my high school years both participating in and chairing MUN conferences, and you may recognize me as a rapporteur from last fall's TritonMUN conference.

With wars across the globe dominating every headline for years, I am very glad to see delegates - future votes, politicians, and activists - participating in a committee all about peace. I'm aware that a review of Peacekeepers and cooperation in Outer Space seem like completely unrelated issues, but at its core, you will be understanding and trying to remove barriers to peace. The fundamental question that you are asking is that in today's world, with nation-states, corporations, rebel groups, terrorists, activists, and ordinary civilians all vying for their own power and desperately trying , how can we prevent war from breaking out. In principle, a noble goal that every nation agrees with, but in practice, every group would rather risk war than have to give up its power. It is your responsibility to find solutions which safely navigate these power struggles and protect the world from war.

Good luck delegates, Faisal El-Khouri

He/Him | TritonMUN XXVII SPECPOL Vice Chair | felkhouri@ucsd.edu

## Position Paper Guidelines

TRITONMUN POSITION PAPER GUIDELINES

- Position Papers are due on April 19, 2024 at 11:59pm.
  - Requests for extensions must be sent by the advisor to TritonMUN by April 12, 2024.
- Position Papers must be submitted to the **Google Form** linked here: https://forms.gle/QjtPF1APuhZwre2Q6
- Format

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- o For committees with one topic there should be two pages for the topic with an additional page for citations, for a total of 3 pages.
- o Papers should be single-spaced in Times New Roman 12 pt. font and include no pictures.
- o At the top of each paper, include your country/person, name, committee, and topic.
- o Required\* Sections: Each of these sections should be clearly labeled
  - Background
  - Past Actions by the Committee (if applicable)
  - Position of your Country/Person
  - Possible Solutions

\*Some committees may ask for different formatting or an alternative to a position paper altogether, this will be clearly noted in the background guide for that committee

## Committee Background

In the history of the earth, there has never been an organization like the United Nations, in terms of its chartering statements, its potential for enforcement, and the level of cooperation and unity that it can provide. Despite its founding in 1945, the UN Peacekeepers were not deployed until 1948, to help bring peace to the Korean peninsula following an attack from the DPRK. Since then, the UN Peacekeepers have been sent to various areas of conflict with many questioning their effectiveness. This is partially due to the nature of the Security Council and its stark divisions in the post-war era.

#### DEFINITIONS

Negative Peace: The absence of violence and/or armed conflict.

**Positive Peace**: A state of harmony and compassion between opposing parties (*Terminology* | *United Nations Peacekeeping*).

**UN Security Council (UNSC)**: A UN body with 15 members, 5 permanent members with veto power (US, UK, France, Russia, China), and 10 rotating members (changing every two years). This is the only body which can authorize a UN Peacekeeping mission.

**Peacemaking**: Facilitating diplomatic solutions between opposing parties in a conflict. It is the creation of negative peace.

Peacekeeping: A range of activities which attempt to enforce peace between opposing parties.

**Peacebuilding**: Creating a lasting, sustainable peace between parties through reconciliation. It is the building of Positive Peace.

**Intrastate conflict**: Conflict and violence between groups, militias, organizations, and governments all within the borders of one country, with no direct interference from other nations.

#### **Topic A: Reevaluating the Peacekeepers**

## BACKGROUND

UN Peacekeeping, as implied by the name, refers to the UN's peacekeeping efforts. These are the *coercive* means by which the UN enforces peace during conflicts. Coercion in this case refers to the use of military force. UN Peacekeeping's goals are, according to the UN, to "protect civilians, actively prevent conflict, reduce violence, strengthen security and empower national authorities to assume these responsibilities." The Security Council is the only organization that may authorize the deployment of Peacekeepers, and they may only be deployed if all parties in the conflict willingly accept their presence in the region. As such, they are rarely called for during active conflicts. Rather, they serve in areas with high tensions and uncertain ceasefires, keeping the parties of conflict separated in hopes to prevent future war, or in cases of severe intrastate conflict where the government is unable to guarantee the safety of its citizens.

UN Peacekeepers are guided by 3 basic principles that, in theory, ensure their effectiveness:

- "Consent of the parties": Under Chapter VI of the UN Charter, Peacekeepers may only be deployed with the consent of all involved parties.
- "Impartiality": Peacekeepers are to remain neutral and not take sides during a conflict.
- "Non-use of force except in self-defense": Though many peacekeepers are armed, those arms may not be used unless they are defending themselves or civilians from a direct threat.

Currently, there are a total of 11 active peacekeeping missions across 3 continents (see: <u>https://betterworldcampaign.org/active-missions</u>) ("Active Missions"). Traditionally, these missions can be categorized as being either "observational" or "militarized". However, today's Peacekeeping forces are "multidimensional", meaning that, in theory at least, they strive to bring stability and positive peace to a region, not just prevent conflict. According to the UN, they strive to "not only to maintain peace and security, but also to facilitate the political process, protect civilians, assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former

combatants; support the organization of elections, protect and promote human rights and assist in restoring the rule of law." In order to achieve this, peacekeepers, even militarized missions, do not only employ soldiers, but also Administrators, Economists, Police officers, Legal experts, De-miners, Electoral observers, Human rights monitors, Civil affairs and governance specialists, Humanitarian workers, Communications and public information expert, in order to not just keep the peace, but build it.



The UN strives to achieve (the provided links are very helpful for exploring each sub-goal of UN Peacekeeping):

- <u>Protect civilians</u>
- <u>Prevent conflicts</u>
- Building Rule of Law and Security Institutions
- <u>Promote human rights</u>
- Empower women
- Deliver field support

("What We Do")

#### HISTORY

The first UN Peacekeeping missions were not armed at all. Rather, their goal was to be impartial observers in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict - under the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), and the Kashmir conflict - under the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). Though these peacekeeping missions were unarmed, both had the goal of closely monitoring and observing the parties of the conflict in order to ensure that the then recently established ceasefire would hold. These two missions were established in 1948 and 1949 respectively, by the decree of the Security Council, and remain active to this day.

The first militarized Peacekeeping force was deployed in 1956 to address the Suez Crisis. The goal of the peacekeepers was to enforce a ceasefire along the Suez between the Egyptian Forces and the allied British-French-Israeli Forces. The mission was able to successfully prevent further war and allowed Egypt to reclaim the Suez Canal from its former colonial master, in line with the UN's mission to aid in decolonization.

In 1960, the UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC) became the first large-scale militarized peacekeeping force deployed, reaching 20,000 personnel at its peak. Over the next few decades, UN Peacekeepers would be deployed to varying degrees of success in various conflicts across the globe. Eventually leading to the UN Peacekeepers being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts .

Modern multidimensional peacekeeping came about in the aftermath of the Cold War. In the early to mid 90s, The number of peacekeepers grew from 11000 to 75000, with 20 new missions being established with various multidimensional goals. However, this added pressure was "beyond [UN Peacekeeping's] capacity to deliver," ("Our History") leading to shameful failures. Most famously, UN Peacekeepers in Rwanda were unable to stop the horrific genocide that occurred there, due to a mixture of understaffing and underresourcing, to the fact that ethnic tensions had grown to a point that UN Peacekeepers could not reasonably be expected to manage.

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In response, the UN (this is important, this is a similar topic to what you will discuss in the conference!) conducted multiple reviews of its operations: independent inquiry [S/1999/1257], comprehensive assessment [A/54/549], and independent inquiry [S/1995/231], which reviewed the actions of Peacekeepers in Rwanda, Yugoslavia, and Somalia.

Today, UN Peacekeepers have reached over 100,000 personnel. Its missions have become the complex multidimensional operations that were and will be discussed. The most recent UN review of its peacekeeping operations occurred in 2014 and was published in 2015, the assessment being entitled "Uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnerships and people," and was conducted by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO), and that report is known as the HIPPO report ("Our History").

#### EFFECTIVENESS

The historical record as presented leaves a conflicted report on how effective peacekeepers really are. There are examples of success and of failure, but in many cases it is unclear whether UN Peacekeeping was effective. Consider the mission in Cyprus, where the UN has maintained a buffer zone between the Northern Turkish Cyprus and the Southern Republic of Cyprus ("UNFICYP"). This mission has lasted for decades, but it has successfully prevented any eruption of conflict, and the two sides will remain at peace for the foreseeable future. Would you consider that a success, as the peace is in fact being kept, or is it a failure, considering the UN presence is constantly required in order to keep the peace, meaning that no lasting or permanent peace has been created.

Overall, peacekeepers tend to be successful at their most basic goal: keeping the sides in a conflict separated. However, the criticism of their effectiveness is very simple: it is impossible to "keep the peace if there is no peace to keep" (DENNIS JETT). In the modern era, most wars are intrastate, rather than interstate. Research has shown that in these war torn regions, combatants

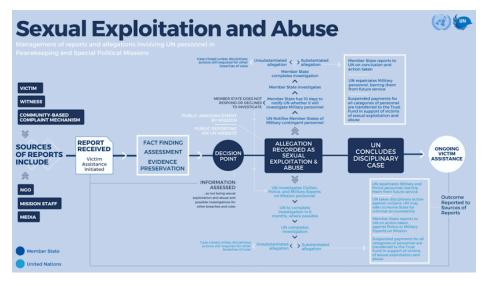
are dissatisfied due to a variety of *grievances*(Lise Howard). Unlike traditional wars over land and resources - wars of *greed*, grievances often involve ethnic, socio-economic, and political tensions. They occur over the average citizen's lack of security, food, water, shelter, and freedom. The UN is woefully under-equipped to keep the peace in these situations, as traditional ceasefires cannot be established. Additionally, violent extremist, terrorist, and militant groups often fill power vacuums in war torn states, and due to their nature, are almost impossible to negotiate with. The UN is again unable to respond to this threat with traditional peacekeeping. Furthermore, in these intrastate wars, the governments of these nations tend to experience partial or total collapse. In a traditional conflict, the states involved remain stable, and are able to enforce domestic peace in each nation separately. However, when a nation collapses, and its government is unable to enforce security, the UN is forced to pick up the tab, and becomes the local police and government (Claire Klobucista and Mariel Ferragamo).

## CRIMES BY PEACEKEEPERS

One of the preeminent goals of international law is the enforcement of rules of war; there are certain "war crimes" which unnecessarily inflict suffering during war that armies must not do. Peacekeepers are supposed to prevent war crimes from occuring, particularly those that involve attacking and harming civilians caught in the middle of conflict. But what happens when Peacekeepers themselves are the ones committing war crimes?

Unfortunately, there has not been adequate documentation of crimes committed historically by UN Peacekeepers. As is often the case in history, the voice of the oppressed and vulnerable is lost to us. More recently, there has been proper documentation and accountability for those who commit heinous crimes. The UN has imposed an ambitious plan to enforce its high standards of conduct. This includes, but is not limited to: training, awareness campaigns, investigations and disciplinary action, and assistance to victims. In addition, it has created a comprehensive database that keeps track of all allegations of misconduct called the Misconduct Tracking System (MTS). As of 2015, the database is public and searchable to allow for independent investigation and accountability ("STANDARDS OF CONDUCT").

However, this has not led to the success that the UN hoped it would. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, there have been a large number of allegations of sexual misconduct and rape. Horrific stories of "peacekeeper babies" have emerged, referring to children that are result of the sexual assault of a civilian girl or woman by a peacekeeper (Kelly Askin). It was in response to this that the Security Council passed resolution 2272, which placed the responsibility of prosecution primarily on the shoulders of the nation from which the peacekeeper originated.



While the UN has made a significant effort, it has not yet done enough to ensure that justice is served and perpetrators are held accountable for their horrid crimes. How can we expect nations to try their soldiers in a court of law "without access to the victim, the crime scene, or witnesses." (Kelly Askin) Additionally, many soldiers come from nations with weak and underdeveloped justice institutions, making it even more unlikely that they are prosecuted. The UN claims that "victims have the right to know the truth about what happened, the right to justice, and the right to reparations, which includes guarantees of non-recurrence," ("STANDARDS OF CONDUCT") yet there has not been any noticeable improvement in the conduct of its peacekeepers, or in the justice system. There have been proposals for tribunals and courts to be established in the nation that Peacekeepers are deployed, alongside legal and medical clinics in order to collect evidence and protect victims, however there has yet to be a noticeable improvement.

## **Replacing Peacekeepers?**

The past few pages have presented a scathing criticism, which naturally leads to the question of alternatives to UN peacekeeping. The most common proposal - which has already been implemented in some form - is for regional organizations to conduct peacekeeping missions. NATO has done so at various points in its history, and the African Union has implemented a relatively successful peacekeeping force in Somalia, with the explicit approval of the UN, to combat the Al-Shabaab terrorist group and bring stability to a nation which has largely collapsed.

The primary argument for regional enforcement is that states in the regions have both a better understanding of the conflict, more investment in it due to proximity, and closer ties to the involved parties, they will have the means, resources, and knowledge to facilitate more successful peacekeeping. However, the source of these benefits tends to lead to far worse pitfalls. The connection, proximity, and understanding that states in the region have often come with biases towards their national interest. This fundamentally conflicts with a peacekeeper's goal of being impartial. In cases where the regional hegemon (the most powerful nation in the region) is involved, most states and regional organizations are unwilling to be involved. Regional peacekeeping missions are also unable to address external threats (a historical example being that formal African colonies could not independently remove their colonial influence through peacekeeping due to the large power imbalance). Finally, they often lack legitimacy or authority, as regional organizations, unlike the UN, do not have all the states of the world as members, and do not have a Charter which clearly outlines when and how peacekeepers must operate (A. WALTER DORN).

Other alternatives to peacekeepers posit that the role of peacekeepers has been stretched far beyond the rational limit. Instead, there must be a focus on peacemaking, and most importantly peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is based around modern ideas of a positive peace. Though peace is traditionally defined as a lack of war, positive peace is defined as "the attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies" (Vision of Peace). It is about harmony between groups, not just a lack of war between them. This addresses the criticism that UN peacekeepers cannot create peace, only maintain it.

The Rwandan Genocide is one of the most infamous events in recent history, not just because of the horrific genocide of Tutsi people, but because of the international community's utter failure to combat it. In its aftermath, the people and government of Rwanda, with UN assistance and guidance, have implemented a highly successful peacebuilding model built around fostering a sense of community and justice named the "Gacaca court system". In this grassroots model, people who perpetrated the genocide could be tried and convicted publicly, by a judge and jury of their community whom they wronged (ANNA KAMANZ). The Gacaca trials also served to promote reconciliation by providing a means for victims to learn the truth about the death of their family members and relatives. They also gave perpetrators the opportunity to confess their crimes, show remorse and ask for forgiveness in front of their community. Through this incredibly progressive take on justice, the 12,000 courts established in small communities across Rwanda convicted over a million criminals, and more importantly, was able to restore a sense of positive peace, harmony and reconciliation in a population which had just experienced a genocide (*Backgrounder Justice 2014.Pdf*). This is, to be clear, a rare and exceptional success story, but it is one that can be replicated in other conflicts.

Finally, it should be noted that UN peacekeepers, and the UN as a whole, does not bear sole responsibility in creating a permanent global peace, and ensuring that the human rights of all are protected. A global peace requires the cooperation of states, organizations, corporations, intergovernmental organizations, activists and other human rights groups, and many more. It is foolish to expect UN Peacekeepers to be able to "keep the peace if there is no peace to keep".

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How effective are UN Peacekeepers?

- 2. How can we ensure that UN Peacekeepers interact with civilians in a moral and legal manner?
- 3. How can we and should we replace UN Peacekeepers?
- 4. How can the different solutions and improvements proposed coexist and reinforce each other in order to effectively keep the peace?

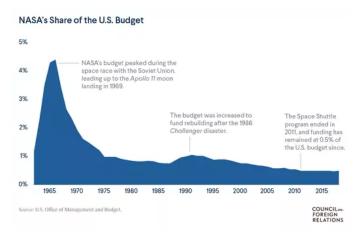
#### **Topic B: Peaceful and Cooperative Use of Space**

#### BACKGROUND

Although a relatively new frontier, the desire to make Outer Space a theater of war has never left the minds of countless political leaders. Starting with the first official international treaty; The Outer Space Treaty, also known as the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, was signed in 1967 by the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union to "prohibit the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction in Outer Space, any military activities on celestial bodies, and precluding any nation from laying jurisdictional claim to any part of outer space" (UNOOSA, *The Outer Space Treaty*). Even as late as 2020, the creation of the Artemis Accords, shows the world's dedication to maintaining some form of peace in Outer Space; outlining the use and exploitation of asteroids, the moon, Mars, and other celestial bodies (NASA, *Artemis Accords*) as many states make large strides towards methods of exploration and research that have the potential to lead to conflict in the coming years.

Although the concrete examples have stemmed from an arms race, the idea of space exploration and research has been in the hearts and minds of humans for centuries. In the last 70 years or so there has been a significant increase in interest from governments around the world in the final

frontier, especially from those who saw it as a new and untapped theater for warfare. Since the 1960's the interest and desire to secure space has grown exponentially. One very clear way of looking at the increase of space exploration is to study the budgets of space-faring nations over time (Council on Foreign Relations, NASA's Share of US Budget).



It is important to note that as more and more nations reach for the stars and subsequently begin exploring the final frontier, the possibility of conflict rises exponentially. On the flip side, the potential for a peaceful and scientific use of outer space presents countless opportunities to benefit all of human civilization rather than just one country. These opportunities are anywhere from the colonization of other planets to help sustain our life on earth, to mining asteroids for the precious minerals deep within, to realizing the greatness that humanity was always destined to achieve, and spreading our metaphorical wings.

If there is one thing to take away from the issue at hand, it is that the nations of the world must cooperate one way or another to handle the limitless complexities of this unknown yet equally fascinating future that has been laid out in front of us. Should the nations of Earth fail to unite and signify their intentions for the peaceful and cooperative development of outer space, the consequences could lead to much worse than simply going our separate ways. This issue is not just a scientific or militaristic one, the solutions you come up with will determine the future of our world in more ways than you could imagine, from who will be the next economic powerhouse to who will dominate the skies, if anyone, the choices are yours.

#### UN AND INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

There have been many UN resolutions on outer space warfare, along with many other international agreements and treaties including the aforementioned Artemis Accords and the Outer Space Treaty. When it comes to the discussion of peaceful and cooperative use of space, the solutions and continued disarmament seem to be in constant limbo. The major military powers of the world have entered into an unofficial cold war, each trying to hold the other back from advancing the militarization of space.

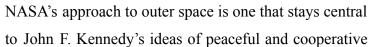
The majority of the resolutions around the militarization of outer space aim to mitigate future conflicts between the great military and space-faring powers. However, as more and more nations gain the ability to reach the final frontier the potential for more and more aggressors rises. One of the consequences of this increased access to space is the uncertainty of whether states may ratify the treaties that have bound the great powers of the world into maintaining a peaceful use of space. Because of this, there is a need to address ways that those who reach for the stars are doing so strictly in the name of peace and cooperation.

## CASE STUDIES

#### NASA, Kennedy Space Center, Cape Canaveral, Florida, United States of America

The United States government is a pioneer in aerospace, especially when it comes to combat and research. Representatives and engineers from across the globe come to Cape Canaveral to learn

from NASA's experts on advanced aerospace and ballistics technology. NASA's expertise in space exploration and military tactics comes from decades of research and development made during the Cold War era in the middle of the Space Race (NASA, Race to Space).



use of outer space. They aim to "further scientific research and understanding of our universe through peaceful means" (Kennedy, A Strategy of Peace). Such examples of this adherence to Kennedy's words include the Apollo missions, Voyager 1 and 2, and the more recent Artemis mission.

NASA's history is not all peaceful however, as seen from recent coordination with DARPA

(Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) to create the DART (Double Asteroid Redirection Test) protocol. Its primary purpose is to provide planetary defense from hazardous near-Earth objects. On the other hand, DARPA is not one to let a good application of technology go to waste. The technology and ballistics needed for the DART protocol to succeed, can and have been repurposed not only for missile defense systems but also for new weapons systems that can be used to strike states from the other side of the planet.







## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Overall you should be examining all aspects of outer space and the geopolitics your country is involved with to decide your stance on this issue. We are expecting to see creative solutions from across the globe expanded to be applied worldwide. Try to look at all of the people that would be affected by a conflict on such a massive scale, and how your approach and solutions may affect them. We wish you all good luck and look forward to seeing all of your work come to fruition on conference day!

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- 1. What role does my country play in the changing political landscape?
- 2. Although my country may not directly be impacted by the weaponization of space, what actions can I take to reduce the potential for hostilities?
- 3. What are the geopolitical impacts of the weaponization of space?
- 4. Does your country have a plan in place in the case that states begin to build up a "space force"? How may that plan be adapted to an international scale to discourage further build-up?

**Technology**: Technology will only be allowed during unmoderated caucuses for the purposes of writing resolutions. They will also be permitted for reading your own and other blocs' resolutions during author's panels and voting blocs. Any other resources delegates have (like research and pre-written speeches) should be printed out to avoid issues. Resolution writing will take place on Google Docs, and all documents will be shared with the chair.

**Recommended Stationary**: Pens, pencils, and erasers are obviously useful. Notepads and sticky notes are useful for taking notes, preparing speeches, and sending notes to other delegates. Note that because of the tech policy, delegates will not be able to use their devices for those activities as well.

**Speeches**: Many delegates come prepared with their opening speeches, expecting to read it. However, the majority of speeches will be done in moderated caucuses, so some delegates will **not** have the opportunity to give their opening speech. Instead, delegates should expect to give multiple speeches in moderated caucuses (it's difficult to predict how many speeches each delegate will give, but we will keep track during the conference to ensure every delegate has the same number of opportunities to speak). Each moderated caucus will have its topic set by the delegate, and it is expected that delegates will give a speech on the topic (many first time delegates don't realize this and will give their opening speech during moderated caucus, but debate runs better when you discuss the topic at hand!). **Topics**: Delegates will "set the agenda" at the start of the conference, where they will choose (by popular vote) between the two topics at hand. It is highly unlikely that both topics will be covered due to time constraints, but delegates should come prepared for both.

**Controversial Topics**: There are active UN Peacekeeping forces in the West Bank. Due to recent events, we ask that delegates avoid discussions on this specific mission and other discussions related to the topic at hand. Resolutions should be a broad review of UN Peacekeeping, so it is generally unnecessary to reference a specific event or mission. We understand that this may restrict some delegates and certain arguments, but this is the policy we will follow for this specific conference.

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