

Security Council

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Security Council Presidency



Topic: The Baltic Cold War



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Honorable delegates,

It is our utmost pleasure we welcome you to Tilburg Model United Nations, 2017! We are both honored and excited to direct the United Nations' Security Council and look forward to meeting you all.

To the veterans of MUN, we promise you a very enriching debate and to the newcomers, we are really excited to be a part of your experience and message us on facebook to ask for any help.

What we desire from the delegates is not how experienced or articulate they are. Rather, we want to see how she/he can respect differences of opinion, work around these, while extending their own stance so that it encompasses more of the others without compromising their own stand, thereby reaching an acceptable practical solutions.

The following pages are to guide you with the agenda as well as the Council. The Guide touches upon all the different aspects that are relevant and will lead to fruitful speaking sessions in the Council.

However, it has to be noted that the background guide only contains basic information which may form the basis for the speech and your research.

We hope that you put in best efforts to research and get all important facets of the diverse agendas. Let us all make the council's direction and debate positive and productive.

Please feel free to contact us, in case of any query. We would love to help you in every way possible.

Truly Yours,

Mohammad Jahin & Beau Goossens

Security Council Presidency

Tilburg Model United Nations

Committee Background:

Establishment

On October 24, 1945, the victors of World War II — China, the U.S.S.R., France, the United Kingdom, and the United States — ratified the UN Charter, creating the Security Council and establishing themselves as its five permanent members with the unique ability to veto resolutions. Originally there were six temporary members, rotating every two years and distributed on an equitable geographic basis. That rule was more explicitly defined in 1965, when the number of temporary members was increased to ten (five from Africa and Asia, one from Eastern Europe, two from Latin America and the Caribbean, and two from Western Europe). On January 17, 1946, the Security Council met for the first time in London. The first UN peacekeeping mission was deployed in 1948 to the Middle East; there have been 60 more. Over the last 60 years, the Security Council has taken action to defuse innumerable international crises, the most recent of which include those in North Korea, Iran, and Lebanon.

Mandate

The UN Charter established six main organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council. It gives primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council, which may meet whenever peace is threatened.

According to the Charter, the United Nations has four purposes:

- to maintain international peace and security;
- to develop friendly relations among nations;
- to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights;
- to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations.

All members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. While other organs of the United Nations make recommendations to member states, only the Security Council has the power to make decisions that member states are then obligated to implement under the Charter.

Functions and Power

Under the United Nations Charter, the functions and powers of the Security Council are:

- to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations;
- to investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction;
- to recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement;
- to formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments;
- to determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken;
- to call on Members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggression;
- to take military action against an aggressor;
- to recommend the admission of new Members;
- to exercise the trusteeship functions of the United Nations in "strategic areas";
- to recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice.

The SC at Tilburg MUN

The Security Council at Tilburg Model United Nations 2017 will address **The Baltic cold war**. While the agenda is designed to challenge delegates to have a good discussion and produce a good resolution at the end of the conference, delegates are also expected to have a good time and an inspiring experience.

The Council consists of 15 seats which are taken by five permanent members and ten non-permanent members. The Permanent Five members (also called the “Big Five” or “P5”) are the People's Republic of China, the French Republic, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. Each of them can prevent any resolution from being passed by voting against it, as every resolution requires approval of all permanent members. This means, permanent members are given a veto right. The non-permanent members are elected on a regional basis for duration of two years. The time span of a membership is determined in such a way that every year five of the non-permanent members are being replaced.



The legal basis for the actions of the Security Council can be found in the UN Charter. Chapter Five contains the composition and procedure of the council, whereas the chapters six to eight deal with substantial matters. Special focus lies on Chapter Seven “Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression”. If, and only if the Security Council passes a resolution under Chapter seven of the Charter, the United Nations consider a conflict to require common actions with force. Thus, military interventions are only legitimate according to international law if it is based on such a resolution.

Furthermore, it is important to bear in mind that the SC adopts any proposals by a consensus, 9 votes in favor is needed to pass a resolution.

Introduction to the topic - Historical background

The occupation of the Baltic States refers to the military occupation of the three Baltic States; Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia by the Soviet Union from 1939-1940. The Soviet government incorporated the Baltics into the USSR, mainly in order to set up military bases, station soviet soldiers and to spread communism by establishing communist governments. Nonetheless, the Soviet occupation did not last long, as the Baltic States welcomed the Germans with open arms, perceiving the Germans as liberators in June 1941 (Britannica, 2016). Hence, the Nazi Germany attacked the USSR and occupied the Baltic States.

Soviet occupation

At the time of the occupation and annexation of the Baltic States, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia had limited allies with the West and Americans; hence the Soviet Union hoped the rest of the world would not acknowledge the occupation. In 1939 Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union established the German-Soviet Non-aggression Pact in which protocols were set up to divide Eastern Europe (Britannica, 2016). Moreover, the Soviet Union forced the Baltics to sign a pact permitting the entry of the Red Army and the opening of borders. Although the independent governments were still intact, the Baltic States lost their independence and sovereignty, and the government was often threatened by the Soviet Union. By 1941 the Soviet Union completely occupied and annexed the Baltics by military force, and the government was renewed according to Soviet standards (Britannica, 2016). "Sovietization" took place rapidly and new assemblies were organized and the Baltics were incorporated into the USSR.

German occupation

Germany occupied the Baltics in 1941, who perceived Nazi Germany as liberators. The Baltics hoped Germany would restore independence for the Baltic States and establish ally ties. Although Germany allowed national governments to reestablish, Germany did not fulfill the high hopes of the Baltics, but turned the Baltic States into a new territorial unit, which eventually would incorporate into the Reich (Britannica, 2016). Hence, the Baltics set up opposition movements such as guerrilla movements and many fled to Finland to join the Finnish military against the Soviet Union. However, during the fall of the Germans in 1944 the Soviet Union regained control in the Baltics, although Germany succeeded to hold on to Lithuania until 1945 (Britannica, 2016).

Soviet republics

The economics of the Baltic States were incorporated into the Soviet system, and Soviet political, industrial and agricultural policies were introduced. Additionally, the political and government structures the Soviet Union established throughout their occupation were reestablished. Opposition in rural areas grew and guerrilla groups lasted until the 1950's, especially in Lithuania (Britannica, 2016). A high immigration rate of non-Balts altered the ethnic and social composition of the Baltics, in particular white-collar Russians, receiving favorable treatment. By the 1970's the Baltics highly opposed the Soviet Union and revolted through riots and demonstrations, and the Soviet System finally collapsed in the 1980's (Britannica, 2016).

Independence of the Baltic States

Throughout the second half of the 1980's the central power structure in Moscow was losing strength, and considering the United States and Europe never legally recognized the incorporation of the Baltic States in the USSR, the Baltic States set up mass movements to regain independence (Britannica, 2016). Hence, on the 23rd of August in 1989 a mass demonstration involving 500,000 people from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania took place (Britannica, 2016). Lithuania was the first to freely elect a parliament since the war and declared independence. Estonia and Latvia followed Lithuania and also declared independence, however the declarations were "illegal" according to the USSR and hence cut all deliveries of oil and gas to the Baltics (Britannica, 2016). The Soviet Union took several measures attempting to reinstate Soviet governments, but in September 1991 the USSR acknowledged the illegality of their occupation to the United Nations and recognized the Baltic States' independence (Britannica, 2016).

What is the current problem at hand?

In recent years Russia's actions in the Ukraine, in particular Russia-Ukraine crisis in 2014, the Baltic States (Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia) fear the repetition of their history with Russia. From 1939-1940 the Soviet Union occupied the Baltic States in order to create a powerful, communist block. The Baltics were soon after occupied by Nazi Germany, and de facto independence was only restored in 1991 when the Soviet Union dismantled. Ever since Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia are recognized as sovereign states, however the Baltics fear Putin's intentions of regaining occupation of the region due to recent events (Britannica, 2016).. Firstly, in 2014 the Russian federation made military invasions into Ukrainian territory, and succeeded to annex the Ukrainian territory Crimea, which is now part of Russia.

Moreover, the election of the American president Donald Trump has raised concerns in the Baltics, as Trump declared he most probably would not challenge any Russian aggression in the Baltics. Hence the Baltic States are afraid they will face a similar future as Ukraine without the support of the United States. In particular Lithuania is fearful of Russia, as the city Kaliningrad (situated on the border between Russia and Poland) has a remarkably high population of Russians, totaling almost half a million (The Guardian, 2016). Lithuania's proximity to Russian borders and relatively weak military defenses therefore puts it in a vulnerable position. Also Latvia a large proportion of the population are pro-Russian rebels, and there are several pro-Russian NGO's and political parties, for whom Putin has increased spending.

Additionally, the Baltic States are not well suited to take on Russia individually, as they all rank near the bottom in military mite and are unable to police their own airspace without NATO. Considering the Baltic States have not been independent for a very long time and have been protected by NATO, if Putin demands NATO to move their bases from the Baltics the chances of invasion are very high. Henceforth, the Baltic States realize a strategic defense plan is absolutely necessary in order to avoid a Russian invasion. The European Union realizes that an invasion in the Baltics would also threaten the safety of the rest of Europe, thus both NATO and the Nordic countries actively support the Baltics and take part in mutual defense agreements. Overall, the earnestness of the issue as hand has raised international concerns, and many fear another cold war, or even a possible nuclear war.

Questions A Resolution Must Answer:

- 1) What consequences will US bases in Eastern Europe have?
- 2) How does Russia's aggression towards the Ukraine affect the Baltic States?
- 3) What are the international consequences of a possible dispute between the Russian federation and the Baltic States?
- 4) To what extent will NATO protect the Baltics from possible Russian occupation?
- 5) What incentives could be given to the parties involved to stop the conflict?
- 6) Is the use of force by any of the parties involved appropriate?
- 7) It is the Security Council's duty to maintain order in the international sphere. What can be done to strengthen international law to protect state sovereignty?
- 8) Many similar crises "end" without solving the root problem and without forming a political framework to resolve the conflict and prevent its reoccurrence. How can a frozen conflict be avoided?
- 9) Many European countries that depend on Russian gas, how can we ensure energy security?
- 10) The US and the EU have placed multiple sanctions against Russia and pro-Russian rebels. How effective have these sanctions been, and should further sanctions be considered? What other consequences can be established for states and other international actors that break international law?

Further Readings:

General info:

Bater, James H., and Romuald J. Misiunas. "Baltic States." Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 25 May 2006. Web. 14 Jan. 2017. <<https://www.britannica.com/place/Baltic-states>>.

Useful articles:

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