UNHSC (1991)

BACKGROUND GUIDE

Dear Delegates,

My name is Darwin Bryen and I will be your Director for NHSMUN 2025. Prepare to travel back in time, as my Co-Director Reuben and I will serve as the chair for the Historical UN Security Council in 1991. You will have your choice of two pressing topics: The Gulf War and The Conflict in Yugoslavia. Whether you are an expert or this is your first time hearing about MUN or the topics, I am sure we will have a great conference.

I will tell you a bit more about myself. I was born and raised in New York City; we just call it "The City". I study at Binghamton University, which is a state school in the rural area of New York State, three hours north of The City. I am studying Economics and minoring in Global Studies, and I will probably go into Law Enforcement. I like to incorporate my studies into extracurriculars like Model UN regardless of my career choice. Model UN is my biggest hobby, but I also like hiking and reading. My favorite read is The Lord of the Rings, which follows a hobbit on his quest to destroy an ancient, evil Ring to save Middle Earth. There are many hiking trails that I take at least once a day, rain or shine. There is nothing better than kicking through the earth, feeling the bite of cold fresh air, and the feeling of your heart beating. Fresh air does great things for your brain, some of my best Model UN ideas have come to me over a walk in the forest.

As I said earlier, Model UN is my biggest hobby. I started in my junior year of High School, right after COVID. My US History teacher and mentor brought me into my high school team and promoted me to Captain the next year. In college, I joined Model UN and was appointed Treasurer for this year. Last year, I served as the Director for ICJ (International Court of Justice) for NHSMUN 2024. In short, I hope to have the delegate, command, and chair experience to make this the best conference I can.

Regardless of whether it is your first conference ever or if you are a veteran at Model UN, I will do my best to make sure you are comfortable and confident in your role. Model UN is a great activity for building confidence, learning new things, and broadening our perspectives. It always is amazing to see the transformation in my delegates both as a Chair and as a Captain. I want to make sure you have a great conference and come out the other side better than before.

Over the next few months, we will be preparing for a great conference. If you have any questions or just want to introduce yourselves, you are always welcome to contact me at the email address below.

Best,

Darwin Bryen

Director, Historical Security Council

NHSMUN 2025, Session I

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Hello everyone!

My name is Reuben, and I will be your director for Session II of the Historical Security Council committee at NHSMUN 2025. Darwin and I cannot wait to get stuck with this fantastic committee and get to know you all. We hope you enjoy this Background Guide! This will be my second year working at NHSMUN, having previously worked as the Assistant Director in the Pakistani Cabinet crisis committee last year, and I'm very excited to return.

I am originally from Kent, in southern England, and I recently graduated from college, having studied Aerospace Engineering at the University of Bristol. I now work for Nuclear Transport Solutions, where I work on nuclear security and logistics for the UK government.

I first got involved with MUN in 2020, attending Harvard MUN in Boston as a high schooler, and I have been keenly involved with MUN ever since, attending the London International Model UN (LIMUN) conference annually as a college delegate, among others across the UK and Europe. Over the past two years, I have become keenly involved with chairing MUN conferences across the UK, with my most recent role as the head chair of the Arab League committee at LIMUN last February. Since I am now out of college, this will be my last MUN conference.

I am motivated to chair conferences like NHSMUN because I believe in the power of Model UN to bring out the best in people- I was a bit of a shy kid in high school, and I never knew I had such a passion for debate until I started MUN. A good conference allows students to stretch their diplomatic legs and become a version of themselves they simply cannot find outside of this world. The two topics we have chosen are some of the most diverse and varied topics I have ever had the chance to be involved with, and whatever your strengths and weaknesses are, I hope that the hard work Darwin and I have put in will give you a chance to push yourselves.

Outside of MUN, I am a keen swimmer and an avid reader, and I love to travel more than anything. Despite my background in STEM at college, I love my history, and that is why HSC was a dream come true for me.

If you have any questions about the background guide at all, please feel free to email either me or Darwin (there are no stupid questions). We've chosen these topics because we find them very interesting, and we love nothing more than to rant about some niche subtopic or a random query on Committee structure. We look forward to hearing from you and I hope that you enjoy reading this guide as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

All the best,

Reuben Bouchard-Saunders

Director, Historical Security Council

NHSMUN 2025, Session II

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A Note on the NHSMUN Difference

Esteemed Faculty and Delegates,

Welcome to NHSMUN 2025! We are Terry Wang and Jordan Baker, and we are this year's Secretary-General and Director-General. Thank you for choosing to attend NHSMUN, the world's largest and most diverse Model United Nations conference for secondary school students. We are thrilled to welcome you to New York City in March.

As a space for collaboration, consensus, and compromise, NHSMUN strives to transform today's brightest thinkers, speakers, and collaborators into tomorrow's leaders. Our organization provides a uniquely tailored experience for all through innovative and accessible programming. We believe that an emphasis on education through simulation is paramount to the Model UN experience, and this idea permeates throughout numerous aspects of the conference:

Realism and accuracy: Although a perfect simulation of the UN is never possible, we believe that one of the core educational responsibilities of MUN conferences is to educate students about how the UN System works. Each NHSMUN committee is a simulation of a real deliberative body so that delegates can research what their country has said in the committee. Our topics are chosen from the issues currently on the agenda of that committee (except historical committees, which take topics from the appropriate time period). We also strive to invite real UN, NGO, and field experts into each committee through our committee speakers program. Moreover, we arrange meetings between students and the actual UN Permanent Mission of the country they are representing. Our delegates have the incredible opportunity to conduct first-hand research, asking thought-provoking questions to current UN representatives and experts in their respective fields of study. These exclusive resources are only available due to IMUNA's formal association with the United Nations Department of Global Communications and consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. No other conference goes so far to deeply immerse students into the UN System.

Educational emphasis, even for awards: At the heart of NHSMUN lies education and compromise. Part of what makes NHSMUN so special is its diverse delegate base. As such, when NHSMUN distributes awards, we strongly de-emphasize their importance in comparison to the educational value of Model UN as an activity. NHSMUN seeks to reward students who excel in the arts of compromise and diplomacy. More importantly, we seek to develop an environment in which delegates can employ their critical thought processes and share ideas with their counterparts from around the world. Given our delegates' plurality of perspectives and experiences, we center our programming around the values of diplomacy and teamwork. In particular, our daises look for and promote constructive leadership that strives towards consensus, as real ambassadors do in the United Nations.

Debate founded on strong knowledge and accessibility: With knowledgeable staff members and delegates from over 70 countries, NHSMUN can facilitate an enriching experience reliant on substantively rigorous debate. To ensure this high quality of debate, our staff members produce detailed, accessible, and comprehensive topic guides (like the one below) to prepare delegates for the nuances inherent in each global issue. This process takes over six months, during which the Directors who lead our committees develop their topics with the valuable input of expert contributors. Because these topics are always changing and evolving, NHSMUN also produces update papers intended to bridge the gap of time between when the background guides are published and when committee starts in March. As such, this guide is designed to be a launching point from which delegates should delve further into their topics. The detailed knowledge that our Directors provide in this background guide through diligent research aims to increase critical thinking within delegates at NHSMUN.

Extremely engaged staff: At NHSMUN, our staffers care deeply about delegates' experiences and what they take away from their time at NHSMUN. Before the conference, our Directors and Assistant Directors are trained rigorously through hours of workshops and exercises both virtual and in-person to provide the best conference experience possible. At the conference,

delegates will have the opportunity to meet their dais members prior to the first committee session, where they may engage one-on-one to discuss their committees and topics. Our Directors and Assistant Directors are trained and empowered to be experts on their topics and they are always available to rapidly answer any questions delegates may have prior to the conference. Our Directors and Assistant Directors read every position paper submitted to NHSMUN and provide thoughtful comments on those submitted by the feedback deadline. Our staff aims not only to tailor the committee experience to delegates' reflections and research but also to facilitate an environment where all delegates' thoughts can be heard.

Empowering participation: The UN relies on the voices of all of its member states to create resolutions most likely to make a meaningful impact on the world. That is our philosophy at NHSMUN too. We believe that to properly delve into an issue and produce fruitful debate, it is crucial to focus the entire energy and attention of the room on the topic at hand. Our Rules of Procedure and our staff focus on making every voice in the committee heard, regardless of each delegate's country assignment or skill level. Additionally, unlike many other conferences, we also emphasize delegate participation after the conference. MUN delegates are well researched and aware of the UN's priorities, and they can serve as the vanguard for action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, we are proud to connect students with other action-oriented organizations to encourage further work on the topics.

Focused committee time: We feel strongly that face-to-face interpersonal connections during debate are critical to producing superior committee experiences and allow for the free flow of ideas. Ensuring policies based on equality and inclusion is one way in which NHSMUN guarantees that every delegate has an equal opportunity to succeed in committee. In order to allow communication and collaboration to be maximized during committee, we have a very dedicated administrative team who work throughout the conference to type up, format, and print draft resolutions and working papers.

As always, we welcome any questions or concerns about the substantive program at NHSMUN 2025 and would be happy to discuss NHSMUN pedagogy with faculty or delegates.

Delegates, it is our sincerest hope that your time at NHSMUN will be thought-provoking and stimulating. NHSMUN is an incredible time to learn, grow, and embrace new opportunities. We look forward to seeing you work both as students and global citizens at the conference.

Best,

Terry Wang   Jordan Baker
Secretary-General   Director-General

A Note on Research and Preparation

Delegate research and preparation is a critical element of attending NHSMUN and enjoying the debate experience. We have provided this Background Guide to introduce the topics that will be discussed in your committee. We encourage and expect each of you to critically explore the selected topics and be able to identify and analyze their intricacies upon arrival to NHSMUN in March.

The task of preparing for the conference can be challenging, but to assist delegates, we have updated our **Beginner Delegate Guide** and **Advanced Delegate Guide**. In particular, these guides contain more detailed instructions on how to prepare a position paper and excellent sources that delegates can use for research. Use these resources to your advantage. They can help transform a sometimes overwhelming task into what it should be: an engaging, interesting, and rewarding experience.

To accurately represent a country, delegates must be able to articulate its policies. Accordingly, NHSMUN requires each delegation (the one or two delegates representing a country in a committee) to write a position paper for each topic on the committee's agenda. In delegations with two students, we strongly encourage each student to research each topic to ensure that they are prepared to debate no matter which topic is selected first. More information about how to write and format position papers can be found in the NHSMUN Research Guide. To summarize, position papers should be structured into three sections:

I: Topic Background – This section should describe the history of the topic as it would be described by the delegate's country. Delegates do not need to give an exhaustive account of the topic, but rather focus on the details that are most important to the delegation's policy and proposed solutions.

II: Country Policy – This section should discuss the delegation's policy regarding the topic. Each paper should state the policy in plain terms and include the relevant statements, statistics, and research that support the effectiveness of the policy. Comparisons with other global issues are also appropriate here.

III. Proposed Solutions – This section should detail the delegation's proposed solutions to address the topic. Descriptions of each solution should be thorough. Each idea should clearly connect to the specific problem it aims to solve and identify potential obstacles to implementation and how they can be avoided. The solution should be a natural extension of the country's policy.

Each topic's position paper should be **no more than 10 pages** long double-spaced with standard margins and font size. **We recommend 3–5 pages per topic as a suitable length**. The paper must be written from the perspective of your assigned country and should articulate the policies you will espouse at the conference.

Each delegation is responsible for sending a copy of its papers to their committee Directors via myDais on or before **February 21, 2025**. If a delegate wishes to receive detailed feedback from the committee's dais, a position must be submitted on or before **January 31, 2025**. The papers received by this earlier deadline will be reviewed by the dais of each committee and returned prior to your arrival at the conference.

Complete instructions for how to submit position papers will be sent to faculty advisers via email. If delegations are unable to submit their position papers on time, please contact us at info@imuna.org.

Delegations that do not submit position papers will be <u>ineligible</u> for awards.

Committee History

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was created in 1945 through the UN Charter as one of the six main organs of the United Nations. It was established with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. Since its first meeting on January 17, 1946, the Security Council has been housed at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City but has held sessions in other cities.[1] The Council comprises 15 members—10 non-permanent and five permanent members. The five permanent members are known as the P5, which includes China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.[2] The ten non-permanent members are allocated based on a geographic representation quota and serve two-year terms each. The seat breakdown is as follows: five for African and Asian states, one for Eastern European States, two for the Latin American and Caribbean States, and two for Western European and other States.[3]

Each member of the Security Council has one vote. An affirmative vote of nine members passes resolutions in the Security Council. However, only the P5 possesses the unique "right to veto" any resolution. If a P5 member votes "no" to a presented resolution, veto power is activated, and the resolution fails automatically. The P5's veto power is used to defend their national interests, uphold a tenet of their foreign policy, or promote an important issue to a state. Thus, the P5's veto power has been a major source of controversy, with veto reform often being a primary element of initiatives to alter the Council.[4] Many member states argue that vetoes harm the Council's ability to address some of the most serious violations of the UN Charter and international law.

According to Chapter Six of the UN Charter, the UN Security Council should always call upon the parties to a dispute by peaceful means and recommend methods of adjustments or terms of settlement in the first instance. The UN Security Council intends to end the conflict quickly if hostilities break out. It gives cease-fire orders to prevent further escalation and sends military observers or peacekeeping forces to monitor cease-fires, alleviate tensions, and separate opposing forces.[5] Unlike the General Assembly, decisions made by the Council are legally binding and must be carried out by member states. According to Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the Security Council can enforce its decisions by imposing economic sanctions, ordering an arms embargo, or enacting military action.[6]

In doing so, the UNSC should determine the existence of possible threats to peace and actions of aggression. Once it has made such a determination, the Security Council may use enforcement tools such as economic sanctions, weapons embargoes, financial penalties, travel restrictions, and even military intervention. It can also break off diplomatic relations, erect blockades, or sanction military involvement to restore peace. A critical component of the Security Council's approach is to focus on people who initiate or perpetuate conflict while aiming to minimize negative consequences on the wider population and economy.[7] When delegates propose these sort of binding measures during committee through directives, they will be expected to be acquainted with, and mention the provisions that allow them to take such measures in the name of the council.

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1   "What is the Security Council?" United Nations Security Council, last accessed September 21, 2024, https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/what-security-council.
2   "The UN Security Council," Council on Foreign Relations, last accessed September 21, 2024, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/un-security-council.
3   "FAQ Security Council," United Nations, last accessed September 21, 2024, https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/faq.
4   Shamala Kandiah Thompson, Karin Landgren, and Paul Romita, "The United Nations in Hindsight: Challenging the Power of the Security Council Veto," Just Security, last modified April 28, 2022, https://www.justsecurity.org/81294/the-united-nations-in-hindsight-challenging-the-power-of-the-security-council-veto/.
5   "Chapter VI: Pacific Settlement of Disputes (Art. 33-38)," United Nations, https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-6.
6   "Security Council," United Nations, last accessed September 21, 2024, https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/security-counci.
7   "Chapter VII: Actions with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression (Art. 39-51)," United Nations, https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-7.

Simulation

As delegates serving on the Security Council at NHSMUN 2025, all members will have the opportunity to put forth resolutions aimed at addressing some of the world's most complex international issues. These resolutions are meant to embody the work of the UNSC and should reflect the central objective of the body: to maintain global security and stability.

The five permanent members of the Security Council, known as the P5, possess veto power on substantive issues. The ten remaining delegations, which bring total committee membership to fifteen, do not have veto power. If there are no permanent members voting against the resolution (i.e. vetoing the resolution), nine affirmative votes are required to pass a resolution regardless of the number of members in attendance. The Council may, from time to time, invite non-SC states, organizations, and/or members to participate in the proceedings. Such members may only vote on procedural matters; once the committee has entered formal voting procedure on any resolution, the invitee is not permitted to cast their vote.

In the simulation of the SC at NHSMUN, the Director and Assistant Director (AD) will chair debate. Together, the Director and AD are referred to as the dais. The dais is charged with the task of maintaining decorum throughout the committee session. The dais will also assist delegates with parliamentary procedure and work to ensure that all points of order are handled appropriately.

A delegate's first job before coming to committee is to research both topics before the committee and to feel comfortable advocating their assigned country's policies. It is important that even if someone does not agree personally with a country's policies, the delegate remains true to country policy and continues to voice these ideas to the committee, remaining cognizant of how these policies are reflected in resolutions written during the simulation. As members on a very specialized committee, delegates are encouraged to work together towards a viable solution, and all members should seek to collaborate with states whose policies and opinions on the issues similar to their own.

The first task in committee will be to set the agenda. Following the vote on the setting of the agenda, delegates will motion to open a new speakers list intended for substantive debate on the first issue on the agenda. Debate will move in the order of this speakers list until a vote by the Council moves the discussion into either a moderated or unmoderated caucus. As committee progresses, the dais might choose to introduce different debate styles (such as round robin or round table) as needed. These forms of debate may be utilized when in the best interest of the committee and will be explained further during the first committee session. Votes on procedural matters such as unmoderated or moderated caucuses are procedural matters and will require a simple majority vote with any abstentions being prohibited.

The goal of this simulation is to produce well-written, comprehensive resolutions to the issues at hand. Through formal and informal debate, delegates will begin this resolution writing process by creating a working paper, which is essentially a collection of ideas on possible solutions. Once the dais accepts the working paper it becomes a draft resolution and may be edited, withdrawn, or merged with another draft resolution at any time prior to formal voting procedure. When the dais accepts a motion to close debate or the speakers list is exhausted, the committee moves into voting procedure on the draft resolutions.

Throughout committee, as the dais sees fit, shorter resolutions focused on more short-term, immediate solutions may be accepted to be voted on more rapidly with less intense debate or amendment processes. During these times, veto power for the P5 is active and abstentions are permitted. Draft resolutions may be passed with any nine countries voting in favor; however, if one or more of the P5 votes negatively on the resolution it automatically does not pass. Working on the Security Council at NHSMUN is a unique, unparalleled opportunity for students to take control of their own education. Delegates' abilities to work together, compromise, and accurately advocate the policies of the states they represent will determine the success of the committee.
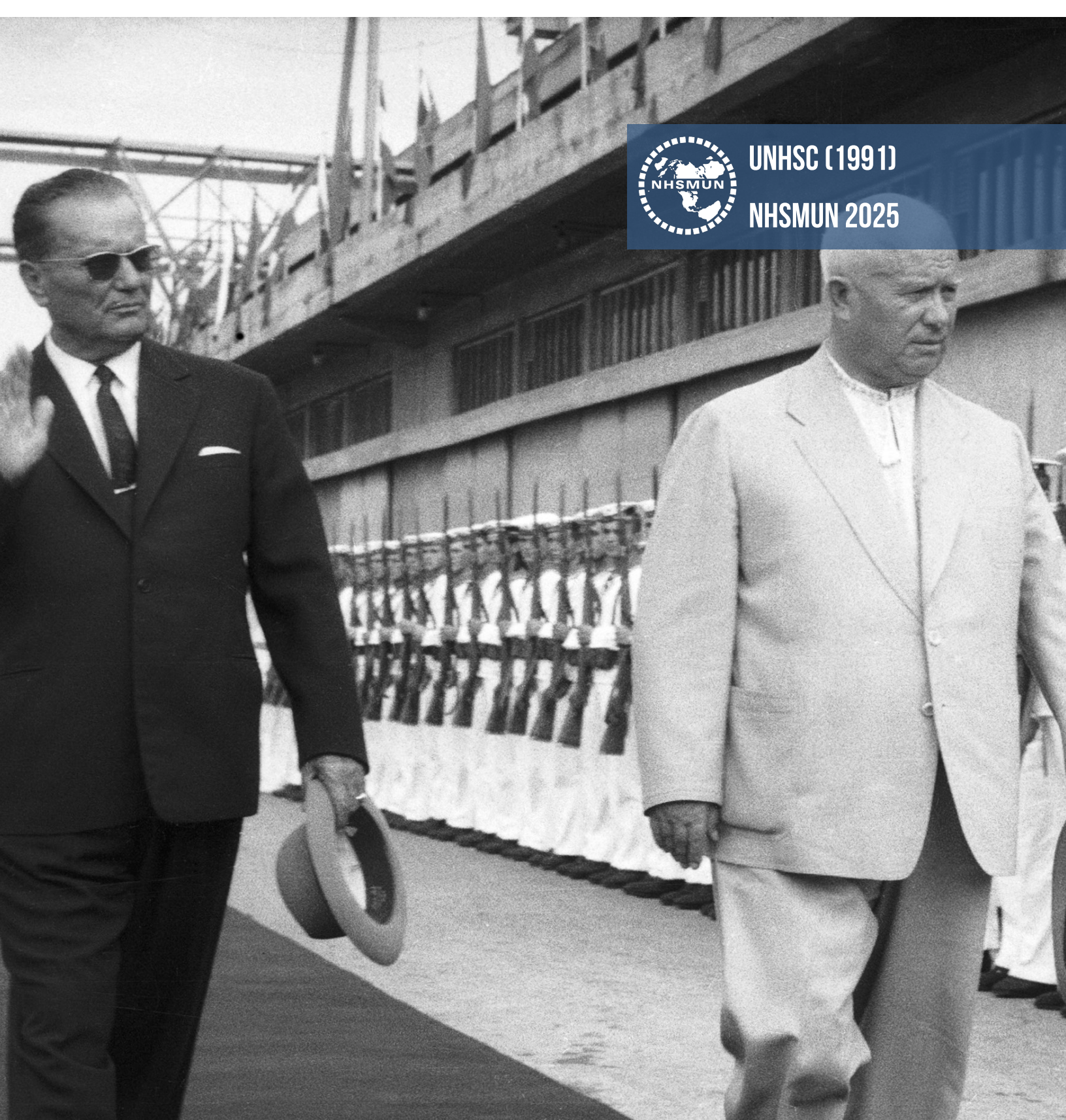
TOPIC A:
THE SITUATION IN YUGOSLAVIA (1991)

Photo Credit: Danilo Škofič

Introduction

Ethnic conflict broke out in Yugoslavia in 1991. Croats and Serbs take up arms against each other. Brothers, cousins, friends, and compatriots are left on different sides. Unspeakable war crimes and random acts of horrible violence strike the people and the armies.[1] Instead of keeping order, the national army has chosen to side with the Serbs and is marching against the Croats. Yugoslavia has gone up in flames, and with it, the hopes of peace, stability, and justice. These ethnic conflicts in the Balkan region remain one of the most significant issues in the situation in Yugoslavia. This conflict is hundreds of years old, with turmoil and heightened emotions.[2]

The background of the establishment of Yugoslavia and its surrounding conflict can be traced back to the rise of nationalism in Croatia and Serbia before the First World War. These nationalist sentiments in Croatia and Serbia explain the context behind the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary.[3] The assassination triggered a domino effect in the Balkan region which resulted in the ignition of the First World War. The First World War between the Allies and the Central Powers changed the dynamics of modern warfare, as well as the situation in the Balkans.[4] Yugoslavia was created in 1917 upon the adoption of the Corfu Declaration.[5] The damage made in the First World War continued to the Second World War. The Axis Powers, especially Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, were interested to expand their territories and influence across the European theater. The Axis forces and Bulgaria later invaded Yugoslavia and divided it into three parts until the end of the Second World War.[6]

After the Second World War, Yugoslavia created its government system and had to navigate its foreign policy between the Western bloc and the Eastern bloc during the Cold War.[7] Tito's rule and the turbulent political situation continued in Yugoslavia. Ethnic militias and army troops are committing war crimes against each other and civilians. Ruthless shillings and massacres are commonplace. It is not state-on-state warfare, where armies march against each other. It is people-on-people warfare, where no one is spared. Croats are kicked out of Serb-controlled land and vice versa. Streams of refugees flee towards safety.

The humanitarian crisis as a result of the turbulent situation in Yugoslavia also remains a significant issue worth paying attention to.[8] This indeed pressures the international community has to protect and stabilize. As the situation in the Balkan Peninsula escalates, so does the humanitarian situation for the civilians. The refugee crisis and the increase in civilian casualties reflect the voices outside the Balkan Peninsula to take action to tackle the security situation in Yugoslavia.[9] However, there is a question of if the level of violence in this conflict is beyond the United Nations Security Council's intervention. Some argue that direct or indirect intervention would generate more limitations than benefits. Either the United Nations (UN) does not take action, or the blue-helmeted peacekeepers will have to travel as an occupying army.[10]

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1 Richard H. Ullman, *The World and Yugoslavia's Wars* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1997).
2 Ullman, *The World and Yugoslavia's Wars*; "The Conflicts," International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, accessed August 2, 2024, https://www.icty.org/en/about/what-former-yugoslavia/conflicts.
3 John Lampe and Mark Mazower, *Ideologies and National Identities* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 54-109, https://books.openedition.org/ceup/2420 ; Vesna Pesic, *Serbian Nationalism and the Origins of the Yugoslav Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1996), https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/30963/1996_april_pwks8.pdf.
4 "How The World Went To War In 1914," Imperial War Museums, accessed July 4, 2024, https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/how-the-world-went-to-war-in-1914.
5 Nenad Kreizer, "Yugoslavia, 1918: Birth of a dead state," *DW*, December 1, 2018, https://www.dw.com/en/yugoslavia-1918-birth-of-a-dead-state/a-46538595.
6 "This Day in History: Yugoslavia joins the Axis Powers," History, November 16, 2009, https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/yugoslavia-joins-the-axis.
7 "64. Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945-1992)," University of Central Arkansas, accessed July 19, 2024, https://uca.edu/politicalscience/home/research-projects/dadm-project/europerussiacentral-asia-region/64-socialist-federal-republic-of-yugoslavia-1945-1992/.
8 David N. Gibbs, *First Do No Harm: Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009), https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv16h2n88.
9 Gibbs, *First Do No Harm: Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia.*.
10 Lindsay Maizland and Richard Haass, "The UN Security Council," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified September 9, 2024,

Delegates should address if there is a middle ground between intervention and non-intervention. Most importantly, they should address what direction the UN Security Council should take. Weapons embargos, sanctions, and rhetoric could be a possible remedy. However, the Security Council needs to assess the real impact of these policies, as well as prioritize what issues within the situation of Yugoslavia should be discussed. The UN Security Council must take up this issue, weigh it, and deliver its opinions. The fate of Yugoslavia lies within the decision of the international community.

History and Description of the Issue

Croatian and Serbian Nationalism Until the First World War

Before the creation of Yugoslavia, Croatia had a long and proud history and a strong ethnic and cultural identity.[11] The Croatians can trace their history back to the 5th-7th centuries with the migration of the Slavic people to the region.[12] Croatia was made up of two different duchies, or territories: Dalmatia and Pannonia. From 925 to 1102, these Duchies were united in the Croatian Kingdom, which stretched throughout modern-day Croatia and included parts of Bosnia. In 1102, complex lines of succession meant the Crown of Croatia was given to the Hungarian King Solomon. Yet in the 1526 Battle of Mohács, with the defeat of Hungary by the Turks, the Crown of Croatia was passed to the Habsburg family who ruled Austria for protection.[13] The Habsburgs established a military frontier in Croatia to defend against the Turks.[14]

Some Croatians opposed the rule of the Habsburgs. Ante Starčević and his nationalist Party of Right were against Austrian rule. They demanded a restoration of "Greater Croatia," which included all the lands controlled by the Crown of Croatia. The Party of Right viewed anyone born in Croatia as a Croat and therefore part of Greater Croatia, including ethnic Serbs and Bosnians born in Croatia.[15]

Another philosophy, advanced by Josip Juraj Strossmayer, advocated for closer relations between the Croats and the Austrians. Strossmayer was a Catholic Bishop who was educated in Vienna and became Court Champlain to the Austrian Emperor in the 1840s.[16] He called for reworking the bonds between the Habsburgs and the Croats. He supported the Austrians and Habsburgs against Hungarian interests.[17] He also viewed a connection with the West as both vital and desirable.[18]

Strossmayer was the primary advocate in Croatia for trialism.[19] The idea of trialism arose among Slavic countries as a result of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise in 1867, in which Hungary gained sovereignty and a privileged position compared to the Slavic countries.[20] Austria-Hungary was a dual monarchy, where the Emperor held the Austrian and Hungarian Crowns. However, those who supported trialism wanted to change it into a triple monarchy, combining the crowns of Austria, Hungary, and Croatia.[21] This means it would make Croatia's status equal to that of Austria and Hungary. Originally, the idea was to give the Czechs this third seat. But many reformers saw the Slavic areas of their empire as more troublesome whereas the Czechs were loyal and less of a threat to the Empire.[22] Eventually, they settled in Croatia, with the capital in Zagreb.[23] Reformers saw trialism as a way

https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/un-security-council.
11 John Lampe and Mark Mazower, *Ideologies and National Identities* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 54-109, https://books.openedition.org/ceup/2420.
12 Maja Torlo, "Religion Misused by Serbs and Croats," *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe* 34, no. 5 (November 2014): 12-23, https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol34/iss5/2.
13 "Croatian history," Peter Sommer Travels, accessed July 4, 2024,. https://www.petersommer.com/croatia/history.
14 Lampe and Mazower, *Ideologies and National Identities*, 54-109.
15 Lampe and Mazower, *Ideologies and National Identities*, 54-109.
16 Klemens Löffler, "Catholic Encyclopedia: Joseph Georg Strossmayer," The Catholic Encyclopedia, accessed September 13, 2024, https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14316a.htm.
17 The Catholic Encyclopedia,"Catholic Encyclopedia: Joseph George Strossmayer."
18 Lampe and Mazower, *Ideologies and National Identities*, 54-109.
19 Mateusz Drozdowski, "Trialism," International Encyclopedia of the First World War, last modified October 18, 2014, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/trialism/.
20 Drozdowski, "Trialism."
21 Drozdowski, "Trialism."
22 Drozdowski, "Trialism."
23 Drozdowski, "Trialism."

to integrate the Slavic population into the Empire, improving its stability.[24]

In 1868, the Croatian assembly accepted a pact called the Nagodba. The Nagodba recognized Croatia as a distinct territory in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It allowed Croatia to have limited self-government and made Croatian the official language of the region. However, Croatia was still under Hungarian control per the agreement.[25] The Party of Right was bitterly opposed to this compromise. Despite distrust between Croatia and Serbia, both agreed in the Rijeka Resolution on October 4, 1905, to cooperate politically in Croatia. In the agreement, representatives from both countries put forward requests from the Austro-Hungarian Empire that would benefit both the Croats and the Serbs. The coalition continued its political activities until the end of World War I and won several elections in Croatia.[26]

It is also crucial to understand the Serbian context before the establishment of Yugoslavia. The first Serbian kingdom was founded in 1217 but was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in 1459.[27] Despite this, the Serbian people retained their distinctive identity. They revolted against the Ottomans in 1804, wrote their First Constitution in 1835, and were finally recognized by the international community in 1878.[28]

Modern Serbian nationalism aimed to unite all Serbs under one state. However, Serbs lived in other parts of the Balkans too, including in Bosnia and Croatia. Therefore, unifying all Serbs under one state would threaten the sovereignty of these groups.[29] This is the central problem for this ethno-nationalist conflict. Because of history and circumstances, people do not always fit the lines on maps. Without a compromise, these groups fight over what they both see as their people and their land.

However, Serbian nationalism does have a unique quality about it. Serbian nationalism is connected with the idea of pan-Slavic nationalism. Pan-Slavic nationalism was the idea to unite all people who speak Slavic languages under one country and to liberate them from the Ottomans.[30] Many Serbian nationalists also advocated for pan-Slavic nationalism.[31] They saw Serbia as surrounded by enemies—Austrians to the north and Turks to the South. Their ally, Russia, was far away on the other hand. Therefore, many pan-Slavic Serbs saw themselves as protectors of all the Slavic and Serb people. They also felt it was their responsibility to unite them under a Greater Serbia.[32]

Although Serbs and Croats are both considered Slavs and speak Slavic languages, there are many cultural differences between the two groups.[33] One difference between the Serbs and Croats is religion. Serbs are largely Eastern Orthodox while Croats are largely Catholic.[34] This difference in religion also impacts differences in language. Despite the proximity and similarity of the Serbian and Croatian languages, they are often viewed as quite different from each other. The main difference is the use of Latin characters, from the Catholic heritage, in Croatian, and Cyrillic characters for Serbian from Eastern Orthodoxy.[35] However, the languages across the

24 Drozdowski, "Trialism."
25 "The Hungarian-Croatian Compromise of 1868 (The Nagodba)," Cornell University Library, accessed September 28, 2024, https://ecommons.cornell.edu/items/33fc7687-fc06-4ed4-970e-ec5dc02512ee.
26 Cornell University, "The Rijeka (Fiume) Resolution, October 4, 1905," Habsburg H-Net Discussion Network, accessed August 8th, 2024, https://ecommons.cornell.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/51ed8ebb-24cb-46d2-9d8d-6d5325651bc5/content.
27 "History of Serbia," Embassy of the Republic of Serbia, accessed July 14, 2024, http://www.newdelhi.mfa.gov.rs/serbiatext.php?subaction=showfull&id=1197024341&ucat=21 template=MeaniNG.
28 Embassy of the Republic of Serbia, "History of Serbia,"
29 Vesna Pesic, *Serbian Nationalism and the Origins of the Yugoslav Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1996), https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/30963/1996_april_pwks8.pdf.
30 "Panslavism," International Encyclopedia of the First World War, last modified July 12, 2017, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/panslavism/.
31 M. Hakan Yavus and Peter Sluglett, *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 2011), 1-2.
32 Sidney Bradshaw Fay, "The Black Hand Plot That Led to the World War," *Current History (1916-1940)* 23, no. 2 (1925): 196–207, http://www.jstor.org/stable/45330407.
33 "What are the Slavic Languages?," Harvard University, accessed August 25, 2024, https://slavic.fas.harvard.edu/pages/what-are-slavic-languages.
34 Robert Hayden, "Serbian and Croatian Nationalism and the Wars In Yugoslavia," Cultural Survival, March 19, 2010, https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/serbian-and-croatian-nationalism-and-wars-yugoslavia.
35 Nikola Ljubešić, Maja Miličević Petrović, and Tanja Samardžić, "Borders and Boundaries in Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Serbian: Twitter Data to the Rescue," *Journal of Linguistic Geography* 6, no. 2 (April 2019): 100–124, https://doi.org/10.1017/jlg.2018.9.

former Yugoslavia are so similar that they were given the name of Bosnia-Croatian-Serbian (BCS).[36] This became widely used around the time of Tito to unify the people.[37] During the conflict in the 1990s, both sides went back to speaking their "pure" form of the language.[38] Despite this, the languages are so similar that everyone should be able to understand each other.[39]

In 1903, pro-Russian, Serbian nationalist groups overthrew King Milan of the Serbian kingdom. Serbian nationalists viewed King Milan as a traitor to the pan-Slavic cause because he had helped the Austrians in a war against the Ottomans. Moreover, he supported the Austrians' plan to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina.[40] A coalition of Serbian nationalists, the military, and cynical politicians seized control of Serbia.[41] The coup empowered the Serbian, pan-slavic, nationalists. It also brought Serbia closer to Russia and further from Austria. The military's role grew as well.

In 1908, Bosnia and Herzegovina became a new province in the Austrian Empire, taken from the Ottoman Empire. However, Serbian nationalists wanted to incorporate Bosnia and Herzegovina into the idea of uniting all Slavic people under one country.[42] The Bosnian Serbs created the *Narodna Odbrana*, loosely translated to National Protectors, to support the ethnic Serbs. In 1911, in Serbia, a more sinister organization called the Black Hand was formed. The Black Hand's official name was Unification or Death. It was made up of members of the military and Serbian nationalists, the same factions who took part in the 1903 coup.[43]

Another organization called *Bela Ruka*, or the White Hand, supported the return of the monarchy. The White Hand placed its support behind the prince regent and later king, Alexandar Karađorđević.[44] Despite sharing similar views about Serbian nationalism, these two groups disliked each other and opposed each other politically. The main difference was that the ambitions of the Black Hand extended beyond Serbia's borders, while the White Hand focused inward. Also, the Black Hand opposed the concentration of power with King Alexander Karađorđević.[45] Because of the distrust between the White Hand and the Black Hand, neither side could exercise total control over the military or the secret services. Therefore, neither organization was able to dictate the course of Serbian policy.[46] Both groups' activities included propaganda, sabotage, and subversion.[47]

Regardless, a majority of the Serbian people ignored the Black Hand and the uber-nationalists. Even the People's Radical Party, the most conservative party in Serbia at the time, opposed them.[48] King Petar, who was placed on the throne by the Black Hand after the coup, cut them off from real power. Essentially, these organizations were not representative of Serbia at the time. While many Serbians resented the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the majority did not support war or the Black Hand. At its peak strength, the group had only 500 members.[49] In short, the Black Hand and its members were an underground society.

The Black Hand recruited "confidential men." These were men, recruited from both Bosnia and Serbia, who served as foot soldiers for the Black Hand. They were trained in bomb-throwing, railroad sabotage, and firearms. They infiltrated Bosnia and Herzegovina.[50] Without support from a majority of the Serbian people, however, they waited in the shadows.

36 Ljubešić, Petrović, and Samardžić, "Borders and Boundaries in Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Serbian: Twitter Data to the Rescue."
37 Ljubešić, Petrović, and Samardžić, "Borders and Boundaries in Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Serbian: Twitter Data to the Rescue."
38 Ljubešić, Petrović, and Samardžić, "Borders and Boundaries in Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Serbian: Twitter Data to the Rescue."
39 Ljubešić, Petrović, and Samardžić, "Borders and Boundaries in Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Serbian: Twitter Data to the Rescue."
40 "How the Bloody 'May Coup' Set Serbia on the Path to World War I," All About History, last modified November 28, 2017, https://www.historyanswers.co.uk/kings-queens/how-the-bloody-may-coup-set-serbia-on-the-path-to-world-war-i/.
41 Embassy of the Republic of Serbia. "History of Serbia",
42 Sarah Pruitt, "How a Wrong Turn Started World War I," History, last modified July 17, 2024, https://www.history.com/news/how-a-wrong-turn-started-world-war-i.
43 Fay, "The Black Hand Plot That Led to the World War."
44 Filip Ejdus, "Serbia's Civil-Military Relations," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (July 2020), https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1901.
45 Ejdus. "Serbia's Civil-Military Relations."
46 Ejdus. "Serbia's Civil-Military Relations."
47 Fay, "The Black Hand Plot That Led to the World War."
48 Fay, "The Black Hand Plot That Led to the World War."
49 Fay, "The Black Hand Plot That Led to the World War."
50 Fay, "The Black Hand Plot That Led to the World War."

The plots of the Black Hand would lead to the events that began World War I and impact the future of Yugoslavia.

Between 1912 and 1913, a group of wars called the Balkan Wars occurred in the region. Together, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece defeated the Ottomans and pushed them out of the Balkans. By the end of the Balkan Wars, Serbia had gained control of the provinces of Nis, Kosovo, and parts of Macedonia.[51] This was viewed as a great victory by the Serbian nationalists. On the other hand, the Austrians viewed this as an unmitigated threat.

The Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and World War I

In response to Serb conquests and their new sense of national pride, the Austrians launched a crackdown on Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Black Hand and the Narodna Odbrana were banned, as well as other "cultural" organizations, whether real or a front for terrorism. This changed the thought process of the leaders of the Black Hand, filled with a new sense of urgency and action.[52]

It was at this time in June 1914 that the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, decided to travel to Sarajevo, Bosnia.[53] The Black Hand heard about the Archduke's plans and saw their chance to strike. Seven assassins, equipped with pistols and bombs from Serbia, prepared to surprise and kill the Archduke. These "assassins" were students and army rejects who wanted to do something for the Serb cause.[54]

On June 28, the last day of the Archduke's visit to Sarajevo, the assassins waited on the road that the Archduke planned to travel. When the cars drove by, an assassin named Cabrinovic asked which one was the Archduke. Upon spotting the Archduke in a topless car and with less security than expected, he threw his bomb. However, he missed. The bomb bounced off the Archduke's car and rolled under another. The bomb exploded, harming two army officers as well as several other bystanders. Cabrinovic was captured, and two other students, who had a chance to kill the Archduke, lost their nerve. The Archduke sped away unharmed.[55]

Against the advice of his guards, Archduke Franz Ferdinand went back out to visit those injured in the attack. Fearing more bombs, his driver sped through the streets of Sarajevo. This caused the driver to take a wrong turn onto a side street in front of a cafe.[56] At this point, the Black Hand thought that their assassination plan had failed. However, one of the assassins, 19-year-old Gavrilo Princip, happened to be sitting in that cafe when the Archduke wandered into his path. When he saw the Archduke, he stood up, pulled out his pistol, walked towards the car, and fired.[57]

Princip killed both Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie with just two bullets. The assassination enraged Austria, who demanded justice. They also saw an opportunity to crush the Serbian nationalist threat for good. As a result, Austria declared war on Serbia. Eventually, allies of both Austria and Serbia were pulled into the war. Serbia was supported by its Slavic ally, Russia. Austria was backed by Germany, who had also declared war on the French. This led to the start of World War I.[58]

Although Austria declared war on Serbia as a result of the assassination, it is uncertain whether the Serbian government authorized and supported the assassination. While the Black Hand and Narodna Odbrana had support from some radical officers in the military and government, this does not mean that they had official government support.[59] Austrian

51 "Balkan Wars 1912-1913," International Encyclopedia of the First World War, last modified October 8, 2014, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/balkan-wars-1912-1913/.
52 Fay, "The Black Hand Plot That Led to the World War."
53 "Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand: Topics in Chronicling America," Library of Congress, August 1, 2024, https://guides.loc.gov/chronicling-america-assassination-franz-ferdinand.
54 Jesse Greenspan, "The Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand," History, last modified September 28, 2024, https://www.history.com/news/the-assassination-of-archduke-franz-ferdinand.
55 Greenspan, "The Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand."
56 Greenspan, "The Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand."
57 Greenspan, "The Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand."
58 "How The World Went To War In 1914," Imperial War Museums, accessed July 4, 2024, https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/how-the-world-went-to-war-in-1914.
59 Fay, "The Black Hand Plot That Led to the World War."

Franz Ferdinand
Credit: Ferdinand Schmutzer

investigator Frederick von Weisner believed "there is no cause even for suspicion," and hence no concrete proof of official Serbian involvement. Despite this, many Austrians believed the Serbian government was involved in the assassination. This enabled the Austro-Hungarian government to convince the public that war with Serbia was necessary.[60]

The Austrians thought that their army would destroy the Serbian army quickly and that they would be home by Christmas in December. The Germans thought that they did not need to worry about the Balkans. They planned to focus on defeating the French in the West first and then turn east and defeat the Russians. However, this plan assumed a quick defeat of the French and slowness from the Russian army. Both Germany and Austria underestimated the strength and speed of the Russian army. In 1904, Russia completed construction on the Trans-Siberian Railroad and underwent industrialization.[61] This meant that Russian troops, guns, and supplies arrived at the Eastern Front more quickly than the Germans and Austrians expected.

As a result, Austria withdrew troops from Serbia to defend against the Russians, and they did not quickly defeat the Serbian army as they had hoped.[62] Eventually, the Allied Powers, which included Serbia, won the war. With this victory, Serbia had the chance to rebuild their country and unify the Slavic people under a Greater Serbia. The end of World War I brought about the creation of the state of Yugoslavia in 1918. Yugoslavia consisted of Croat, Slovenian, and Bosnian territories that had previously been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Kingdom of Serbia.[63] However, the Serbian army also saw approximately 30,000 dead, 150,000 wounded, and 300,000 captured. The war had a severe impact on the development.[64]

Creation and History of Yugoslavia

The State of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs was the goal of Serbian nationalists for generations. Even from the start of the First World War, the Serbians declared, in the Nis Declaration, their goal to create a Yugoslav State.[65] After World War I, a multitude of Eastern European states were carved out of

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60 Mile Bjelajac, "Serbia," International Encyclopedia of the First World War, last modified October 1, 2015, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/serbia.
61 Zack Beauchamp, "The Trans-Siberian Railway reshaped world history," *Vox*, October 5. 2016, https://www.vox.com/world/2016/10/5/13167966/100th-anniversary-trans-siberian-railway-google-doodle.
62 "World War I," History, last modified May 10, 2024, https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/world-war-i-history.
63 "The Breakup of Yugoslavia, 1990-1992," U.S Department of State - Office of the Historian, accessed August 24, 2024, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/breakup-yugoslavia.
64 Bjelajac. "Serbia."
65 Dr Latinka Perović, "The Kingdom of Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians (1918–1929) / the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929–1941): Emergence, Duration and End," accessed July 4, 2024, https://www.yuhistorija.com/doc/LP%20-%20Kindgom%20SCS%20-%20

former German, Austrian, and Russian Empires; Yugoslavia was only one of the new states.

In 1917, the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians adopted the Corfu Declaration, which accepted the creation of a Yugoslav state.[66] Additionally, the Treaty of Versailles, the treaty that officially ended World War I, had already confirmed the existence of such a state in international law. Despite this, there still was much opposition to the creation of Yugoslavia.

Created in 1905, the Croatian People's Peasant Party (HPSS) disagreed with the speed at which the Croatian people joined Yugoslavia. Stjepan Radić, the leader of the Croatian People's Peasant Party, argued for step-by-step negotiations to protect Croatian autonomy. However, Croatian delegates in Belgarde agreed with the Serbians. Unification was agreed upon very quickly.[67] Many people were worried that, like Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, Yugoslavia would be a so-called "Prison of Nations." They were concerned that these various ethnic groups would lose their sovereignty with the creation of Yugoslavia. Already, there was conflict and polarization over the creation of the constitution for the new

state.[68]

On the other hand, the Serbs claimed that they were the creators of this new state and the protectors of the Slavic people. As such, the Serbs felt that they should decide how to form the new state. In the words of Stojan M. Protić, the head of the Serbian Radical Party: "Serbia, having sacrificed so much for liberation and unification, could not accept it. We did not want them to be servants but we had to let them know that it had been us, Serbians, who had won the battle for liberation and made unification possible."[69] The Serbs did not want to see their hard work undone by claims of autonomy and decentralization.

Eventually, the St. Vitus's Day Constitution was adopted and established the Kingdom of Serbians, Croatians, and Slovenians as a centralized monarchy. This monarchy was led by a Serbian King. Many Croatians had concerns about the new constitution. They felt as if they were rushed into this new state and traded Austrian and Hungarian domination for Serbian domination. On the other hand, the Serbs saw this as a great victory: 12 million people of different ethnicities all

Yugoslavia.pdf.
66 Nenad Kreizer, "Yugoslavia, 1918: Birth of a dead state," *DW*, December 1, 2018, https://www.dw.com/en/yugoslavia-1918-birth-of-a-dead-state/a-46538595.
67 Perović, "The Kingdom of Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians."
68 Kreizer, "Yugoslavia, 1918: Birth of a dead state."
69 Perović, "The Kingdom of Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians."

Creation of Yugoslavia map with merger dates
Credit: Own work derived from File:Srbsko 1919.svg

joined under one banner.[70]

Regardless, Yugoslavia experienced serious problems from the beginning. Not only were there ethnic and religious differences, but a whole host of diverse issues arose. Literacy was a major issue, with some areas, particularly the North and the West, having high rates of literacy, while the East and South had lower literacy rates. Other issues included industrial differences, differences in development, and different infrastructure.[71] In short, the Croatian area in the West and the Slovenian area in the North were more developed than the East and the South, which were inhabited by the Serbs, as well as other minorities, such as the Macedonians and Albanian Kosovars. Many Croats felt that their money was unfairly redistributed southward and eastward through taxation to help these other ethnic groups. This would be a major rallying point for Croatians in the late 20th century.[72]

Despite this, there was still a degree of cohesion in the state. For example, almost everyone in Yugoslavia could understand each other. The language, Štokavian, was widespread, and almost everyone spoke it.[73] Another quirk of language that helped cohesion was the translation of the word *Narod*. *Narod* means people and country. Therefore, it was interpreted that the new *narod* could mean a nation, a state, or anything in between.[74] The flexibility of that word led to much of the initial acceptance of the new state. Croatians could see the *Narod* as simply a political term that meant different people united under one banner. Serbs, on the other hand, could see *Narod* as a fulfillment of the pan-Slavic and Greater Serbian dreams of unification and integration.

Although Yugoslavia had a functioning Parliament, the Constitution put all the power in the hands of the King. This included the power to convene and dissolve the People's Assembly. In short, the government of Yugoslavia was a royal dictatorship, with some vestige of democratic parliamentarianism.[75] Like most of the Eastern European governments in the wake of the First World War, Yugoslavia would start with very weak democratic institutions and eventually fall further into dictatorship and fascism.

On June 20, 1928, Croatian separatist Stjepan Radić, ignoring threats of political violence, came to an opening session of Parliament. During a speech given by Puniša Račić, a supporter of Yugoslav centralism and unity, and an opponent of Radić's brand of separatism, Račić found himself booed and in a heated debate with his rivals. Enraged and scared, he pulled out a pistol and shot towards the Croatian delegation. Two Croats were killed and two were wounded. This included Radić himself, who died of his injuries. The outrage was immediate and severe. The Croatians turned Radić into a martyr and began protesting.[76] The country looked as if it was on the brink of a Civil War.

In response to the unrest, King Alexander ended the experiment with democracy on January 6, 1929. He declared himself the Royal Dictator and banned opposition. King Alexander believed that authoritarian rule was the way to fix instability in the country. A policy called Yugoslav integralism was decreed. This meant so-called tribal differences needed to be put aside. The Yugoslav identity needed to be front and center.[77] This calmed the Croatian unrest for a short time but did not solve the problem.

King Alexander was helped along his way to power by the White Hand.[78] Although he was a Serb, King Alexander was not an ultra-nationalist and did not believe in the ideas of Greater Serbia. He opposed ethnic conflict and did not believe in racial superiority; rather, he saw himself as a King of different people. He was pragmatic and wanted the stability and unity of his country. Many other leaders of newly formed Eastern European countries also shared this philosophy. Except for Czechoslovakia, every country in Eastern Europe

70 Perović, "The Kingdom of Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians."
71 Perović, "The Kingdom of Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians."
72 Perović, "The Kingdom of Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians."
73 Marie-Janine Calic, *A History of Yugoslavia* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2019), https://library.oapen.org/viewer/web/viewer.html?file=/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/24993/1005109.pdf?sequence%3D1&isAllowed=y.
74 Calic, *A History of Yugoslavia*.
75 Perović, "The Kingdom of Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians."
76 Calic, *A History of Yugoslavia*.
77 Perović, "The Kingdom of Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians."
78 Filip Ejdus. "Serbia's Civil-Military Relations."

shed its weak democracy and developed into a dictatorship. Oftentimes, these countries' militaries exercised greater control as well. King Alexander's seizure of power can be interpreted as either a desperate move to stabilize a fracturing state or as a cynical seizure of more power under the excuse of stabilizing the country.

In 1934, while on a trip to France, King Alexander was assassinated. His son and heir to the throne, King Peter II, was underage. Therefore, Prince Regent Paul was to rule the country until the King was old enough to do so himself.[79] The new leader had to endure the winds of change that swept over Europe in the late 1930s. During this time, fascism began to rise in Europe. The Italian leader, Benito Mussolini, began to make claims on Yugoslav land, particularly the land of Croatia.[80] Furthermore, the Nazi Party in Germany annexed Austria, which bordered Yugoslavia, in 1938.[81] Threats abounded around Yugoslavia going into the 1940s, and many looked to the West for protection.

Since the 1920s, Yugoslavia had been a part of the "Little Entente." This was an informal alliance, led by France, that included Czechoslovakia and Romania as well. These countries were to provide mutual protection for each other. Originally, the alliance was established to protect these countries from Hungary. In 1933, however, Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany and expressed intentions to expand its territory. As a result, the "Little Entente" strengthened its bonds.[82] They created a Permanent Secretariat and a Permanent Council in Geneva, Switzerland. Their foreign ministers would meet there three times a year to discuss policy.[83] However, the alliance began to weaken after Germany invaded the Rhineland, a region bordering France and Germany in 1936. The "Little

Entente" eventually died in 1938 when Hitler annexed the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia while France and the other members of the "Little Entente" sat by idly.[84]

World War II, Nazi Occupation, The Ustaše, and Resistance

In the late 1930s, Germany found itself drawn into Balkan politics just before the start of World War II. Adolf Hitler sought to expand Germany's territory eastward, and tensions between Germany and the Soviet Union were on the rise. For this reason, Hitler made several deals with Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria to support its military campaign against the Soviet Union.[85] As Hitler formed alliances with or invaded neighboring countries, the pressure on Yugoslavia to join Germany and the other Axis Powers (Italy and Japan) grew.[86]

Italy, another Axis Power, also had an interest in the Balkans. In 1915, during World War I, Italy signed the Secret Treaty of London. This treaty promised Italy the port of Fiume in Croatia, which had a mostly Italian population, and a large part of Dalmatia in exchange for entering the war on the side of the Allies.[87] However, Italy did not get the land promised by the treaty after the Allies' victory. This left many Italians disappointed and angry after the Treaty of Versailles was signed. This also helped the rise of Benito Mussolini, a fascist leader, to power in Italy in 1922.[88]

Italy's dreams of an Empire in the Balkans led to a resumed conflict in the region. In 1939, Italy annexed Albania.[89] In 1940, Italy attempted to invade Greece but struggled with the campaign. Mussolini called upon Adolf Hitler for support and troops. Hitler, in turn, called upon the Yugoslavs to allow transit for Axis troops and demanded that they sign the

79 Perović, "The Kingdom of Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians."
80 Blaine Taylor, "Prince Paul Karađorđević of Yugoslavia," Warfare History Network," January 2003, https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/article/prince-paul-karadordevic-of-yugoslavia/.
81 "This Day in History: Yugoslavia joins the Axis Powers," History, November 16, 2009, https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/yugoslavia-joins-the-axis.
82 "Little Entente," The Royal Family of Serbia, accessed September 28, 2024, https://royalfamily.org/little-entante/.
83 "Little Entente: New Great Power?" TIME, February 27, 1933, https://time.com/archive/6750746/little-entente-new-great-power/.
84 The Royal Family of Serbia, "Little Entente."
85 Mark Cartwright, "The Causes of WWII," World History Encyclopedia, last updated March 26, 2024, https://www.worldhistory.org/article/2409/the-causes-of-wwii/.
86 "History, "This Day In History: Yugoslavia joins the Axis Powers."
87 "This Day In History: Allies sign Treaty of London," History, October 28, 2009, https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/allies-sign-treaty-of-london.
88 "This Day In History: Italian delegates announce return to Paris peace conference," History, November 5, 2009, https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/italian-delegates-return-to-paris-peace-conference.
89 Angelo Piero Sereni, "The Legal Status of Albania," The American Political Science Review 35, no. 2 (April 1941): 311–317, https://doi.org/10.2307/1948702.

Tripartite Pact.[90] In short, Hitler demanded Yugoslavia join the Axis Powers. This demand revealed the discord within the Yugoslav government. Some factions argued for joining the Axis powers, while other factions were pro-France and pro-Britain, and opposed working with the Germans.

On March 25, 1941, Prince Regent Paul joined the Axis and allowed German troops to cross.[91] Almost immediately, the military revolted and overthrew the Regent. They placed King Peter on the throne, who was 17 at the time. They ended the regency despite King Peter's young age. Yet King Peter was a capable ruler at 17, unfortunately, he had to flee the moment German troops invaded later that year, and never could return due to Tito's partisans and their opposition to the monarchy. They renounced the Axis and told the Germans they could not cross.

In early 1941, Hitler ordered the Axis armies to invade Yugoslavia.[92] With 1,900 miles (~3,000km) of border and an obsolete army, the Yugoslavs did not stand a chance.[93]

Yugoslavia was defeated within 11 days, with its government fleeing to London.[94] The Yugoslav strategy of delaying actions, defensive fighting, and limited counterattacks was a military failure. However, these tactics, combined with Yugoslavia's mountainous terrain, made the Yugoslavs uniquely suited for guerilla warfare.[95]

The combined invasion of Germany, Italy, and Bulgaria overwhelmed and cut to pieces the weak Yugoslav Army. They divided the country into different spheres of influence. The Italians took the coastline and Croatia, the Germans occupied Serbia, Hungary got its old land of Vojvodina and West Banat, and Bulgaria got the south. To lead the Croatian state, the Italians and Germans placed the Ustase in power. The Ustase was a fascist organization in the Croatian parts of Yugoslavia, who were banned after the 1929 coup for being terrorists. They tried to stoke Croatian nationalism before, with revolts and assassinations their choice of warfare.[96]

When the Italians put them in power in Croatia, they

90 "Axis Invasion of Yugoslavia," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed July 4, 2024, https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/axis-invasion-of-yugoslavia.
91 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Axis Invasion of Yugoslavia."
92 Stephen A. Hart, "World Wars: Partisans: War in the Balkans 1941 - 1945," BBC, last modified February 17, 2011, https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/partisan_fighters_01.shtml.
93 "The German Campaign In The Balkans (Spring 1941)," U.S. Army Center of Military History, accessed July 4, 2024, https://history.army.mil/books/wwii/balkan/20_260_2.htm.
94 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Axis Invasion of Yugoslavia."
95 U.S. Army Center of Military History, "The German Campaign In The Balkans (Spring 1941)."
96 "Ustasa," European Holocaust Remembrance Infrastructure (EHRI), accessed September 28, 2024, https://portal.ehri-project.eu/authorities/ehri_cb-359.

Axis invasion of Yugoslavia

Credit: Maps Department of the U.S. Military Academy, West Point.

immediately set out to create the dream of an ethnically pure Greater Croatia. This meant the Jews, Serbs, and Romani inhabitants of their "Great Croatia" would have to go. They rounded up and shot everyone they could find that fell into those categories.[97] The Ustase had a particular method of discovering Serbs versus non-Serbs. They would have them do the sign of the cross, where one touches their head and heart, and then, if Catholic, the left shoulder first, and if Eastern Orthodox, the right shoulder first. Those who touched their right shoulder were shot immediately.

The brutality was so shocking and excessive that even the Italians and Germans would have to intervene to try and slow the Ustase regime down.[98] Ultimately, around 320,000 to 340,000 Serbs were murdered, and 30,000 Jews were murdered or sent to Auschwitz concentration camp.[99]

The brutality of the Ustase would be seared in the pages of history, and in the minds of the Serbs, all the way until the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s. The fear of Croatian nationalism was sharpened. The countries that make up Yugoslavia are not uniform as there are Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia, and Croatians in Bosnia and Serbia. Many Serbian nationalists in the 1990s did not trust the Croatian nationalists because of this. They feared that a Croatian nationalist government would repeat the same brutalities. Politics aside, what is clear is the Usatse were evil. They were collaborators, but unique. They were not passive and did not just accept the German occupation, they furthered it; they did not just accept the crimes, they committed new ones. The Germans won on paper, occupying the cities and the main roads. Deep in the forests and mountains, deep in the back roads and small villages, the embers of resistance still burned.

The first of these units were called the Chetniks. The Chetniks were named after čete, the word for bands. These were irregular men who would harass Turkish troops in the 19th century.[100] Formed out of the Yugoslav army and consisting of only Serbians, the Chetniks were commanded by former army Colonel Dragoljub Mihailović.[101] Fearing German retribution against civilians as well as the German military ability, the Chetniks withdrew to the mountains and refused to fight in the open. Many Chetniks wanted the restoration of King Peter II after the war.[102] This would often bring them into conflict with the second group of partisans.

The second group of partisans was built around Josep Broz Tito and the Communist Party. They would be called the partisans. They viewed the fight against the Nazis as the first step towards a socialist state. While the Chetniks were ethnically Serb, the Partisans under Tito did not care about ethnicity. They appealed to Serbs and Croats without discrimination.[103] While not exactly taking orders from Moscow, Tito did receive support from the Soviet Union, as well as some support from the United States. Britain and Churchill, however, steadfastly supported the King in Exile, seeing Tito as a pawn in Stalin's game to dominate the Balkans.

Both the Chetniks and the Partisans would often engage in combat. By the end of the war, when the Axis defeat was all but certain, these groups fought in a three-way conflict. Partisans massacred Chetniks, and Chetniks massacred partisans. While the West—the British and US—originally supported the Chetniks in the early war. They eventually ended their support.[104]

There would be no soft underbelly for the Allies. In 1943, the Allies invaded Italy which would later surrender. Second World War ended two years later. Neither the Allies nor the Soviets invaded and liberated Yugoslavia during that time. This meant Yugoslavia had to liberate itself from the Nazi occupation. So, Yugoslavia felt no obligation to join either the Eastern Bloc or the Western Bloc.

97 EHRI, "Ustasa."
98 EHRI, "Ustasa."
99 "Jasenovac," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed July 17, 2024, https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/jasenovac.
100 "Chetniks," International Encyclopedia of the First World War, last modified October 8, 2014, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/chetniks/.
101 "Mihailović, Dragoljub "Draža"," Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, accessed September 28, 2024, https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/topic-guide/mihailovic-dragoljub-draza.
102 International Encyclopedia of the First World War, "Chetniks."
103 Hart, "World Wars: Partisans: War in the Balkans 1941 - 1945."
104 Hart, "World Wars: Partisans: War in the Balkans 1941 - 1945."

Yugoslav Political Structure and Politics Before 1991

After the victory in the Second World War, Yugoslavia established its government and identity. Because Tito had freed Yugoslavia without the direct help of the West or the Soviet Union, he chose to go his own way. Tito believed in Marxist-Lenist principles, which would have made Tito seem like a natural ally of the Soviet Union. However, he took his path after a falling out with Stalin. Yugoslavia was a third way abroad and a marvel of cooperation at home. However, this was all built on a pillar of sand. The Yugoslav wars were foreshadowed by large structural issues in the whole system. [105]

Usually, there are three types of government systems: Unitary, Federal, and Confederal. Unitary means the Central Government makes all the policy, and local governments just carry out their orders. So the government will tell the local area to build a road, and the local government will call in a contractor to do the task. An example of this is France. In a Federal System, the central or "Federal" government and the local governments share the "areas of competence." This means the jobs of these governments are separate and usually non-overlapping. An example is the United States, where the Federal Government runs the military, and the state and local governments run the local police. Also, usually, neither government is accountable to the other for its policies, rather they have to listen to their voters, not each other. In a Confederal System, the local government is the one with most of the power. They choose what powers to give to the central government. Also, the central government is usually held to account by the local governments, rather than the voters. An example of this is each locality has its military, but combines the forces in times of war. This is an example of the United States during the American Revolution. [106]

Yugoslavia had an unusual hybrid of the Federal and Confederal systems. The Serbs wanted a Federal system, but the Croatians wanted a Confederal System. As a compromise, Tito combined the systems to create a very unique system entirely. In short, the government was organized along the lines of Federation, Republics, Districts, and Communes.[107] The Federation was Yugoslavia as a whole and was led by Tito. The Republics included Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia. The Districts were the smaller units, like cities and towns. Communes were a unique innovation by Tito; they served

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105   J. Marcus Fleming and Viktor R. Sertic, The Yugoslav Economic System (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, January 1962), https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/024/1962/002/article-A003-en.xml.
106   Fleming and Sertic, *The Yugoslav Economic System.*
107   Fleming and Sertic, *The Yugoslav Economic System.*

Josip Broz Tito
Credit: Unknown author

an economic purpose. Economic power was placed in the Federation and the Communes.[108]

On November 9, 1945, the Constituent Assembly proclaimed the formation of Yugoslavia. Josip Broz Tito was elected Prime Minister and Ivan Ribar was elected President. A new constitution went into effect on January 31, 1946.[109] In effect, the Prime Minister was the Head of Government, while the President was the Head of State. The Constituent Assembly held a lot of power as the Legislative. Furthermore, the Communist Party held large amounts of power as well. However, most of the power rested within Tito until his death on May 4, 1980.[110]

Yugoslavia's economy was weakening. By 1983, Yugoslavia was in dire financial condition. US Government estimated it would take USD 1.3 billion and USD 1.2 billion of IMF money to keep the country afloat.[111] Overall, the chronic mismanagement of the Yugoslav economy, a weak global economy, and massive foreign borrowing left the Yugoslav economy teetering and in significant debt of approximately USD 20 billion.[112]

The problem with Yugoslavia is a mix of communist and decentralized issues. In the USSR, the economy suffered because it was too centralized. However, the situation in Yugoslavia was somewhat different. Because of the ethnic differences, a unified Yugoslav economy was not an option. Instead, each republic would have its own, separate economic system.[113] The Federal system was more there to redistribute wealth and fund the military rather than create it.[114] The Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, and other republics developed separately.

Wrose, each region was able to borrow from foreign creditors directly, leading to more debt taken on by the republics and deferred to the Federal government.[115] Debt rose, and the balance of payments (exports - imports) fell deep into negative (where imports are greater than exports, meaning that money is leaving the country).[116] This led to import restrictions, which led to shortages, inflation around 30 and 40 percent, and a black market to acquire those goods.[117]

Furthermore, these economic problems hit different parts of the country differently. In 1981, the North, which includes Slovenia and Croatia, had an estimated per capita output of USD 2,871, while the South had a per capita output of USD 1,394.[118] The North held about 80 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP), while the South had 20 percent.[119] This meant, under a communist idea of equality, that money was redistributed southward to ensure they could eat and live. However, the North would often resent the Federal government for this, and oppose the Federal system. This is a reason why the separatist movements began in earnest in Slovenia and Croatia first.

Tito was a large factor in keeping the country united. Without him, the whole country would fall apart into economic and ethnic chaos.[120] These were predictions made in 1970, which were 10 years before Tito's death and 21 years before the beginning of the Yugoslav wars.

In foreign affairs, Yugoslavia tried to present itself as a neutral country—as a part of the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War. Tito rejected both Western ideas and Soviet control, although receiving both US and Soviet aid as both

108 Fleming and Sertic, *The Yugoslav Economic System*.
109 "64. Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945-1992)," University of Central Arkansas, accessed July 19, 2024, https://uca.edu/politicalscience/home/research-projects/dadm-project/europerussiacentral-asia-region/64-socialist-federal-republic-of-yugoslavia-1945-1992/.
110 Jonathan Wright and Steven Casey, *Mental Maps in the Early Cold War Era, 1945-68* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 131-159, https://link.springer.com/book/10.1057/9780230306066/.
111 "Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?," Central Intelligence Agency, January 31, 1983, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP86T00302R000801270010-6.pdf.
112 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?"
113 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?"
114 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?"
115 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?"
116 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?"
117 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?"
118 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?"
119 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis?"
120 "Yugoslavia: The Outworn Structure," Directorate of Intelligence, November 20, 1970, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/esau-46.pdf.

powers tried to influence the path Yugoslavia would take.[121] However, with the rise of Egypt, China, and India as well as other contenders, like Ghana and Indonesia, all competing for leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement, Yugoslavia was thrown to the side.

Nearing the 1990s, every country in the Eastern Bloc was facing the same issues. Their economies were collectively slowing down. Because of this and the economic issue, the political legitimacy of the Soviet bloc was crumbling. In the past, any cracks in the Soviet Empire were fixed with industrialism and militarism. That was no longer the case under the new leader of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev.

Eventually, negotiations between the United States and the USSR on weapons turned into something larger and uncontrollable. In the USSR, Gorbachev announced a plan called *Glasnost*, which means openness in Russian. This plan would allow limited discussion and criticism of the Soviet regime. However, *Glasnost* did not apply to every crisis and criticism. After the Chornobyl accident, the USSR seemed to forget the entire concept of "openness." Another idea was *Perestroika*, which included changes to the economy of the USSR to allow for more private ownership and business.[122]

While these were the internal issues of the USSR, they would lead to a sea change in the politics of the Eastern Bloc. Eastern Europe, consisting of the countries of East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Hungary, fell under the Soviet sphere of influence. In 1968 in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and 1956 in Budapest, Hungary, Soviet tanks upheld the Soviet-dominated world order.[123] They crushed any opposition. This was called the Brezhnev Doctrine, where members of the Warsaw Pact, which, in practice, was just Russia, could intervene in other Communist States to "maintain stability."[124] In 1988, however, Gorbachev

announced the withdrawal of over 500,000 soldiers from Eastern and Central Europe.[125] This meant the USSR would no longer defend the Socialist order within these countries.

On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall came down. Thousands of people hacked and sawed away at the concrete and barbed wire that kept people apart. One by one, the dominoes toppled. Guards looked on in shocked silence. A mass of humanity surged towards each other, each side longing to be free, everyone determined to meet their fellow human. As the curtain fell on an old era of history and rose upon a new, one thing was on all of their minds: hope.

Current Status

Slovene Conflict

Slovenia was one of the most politically and economically free states in Yugoslavia with a small population of two million people.[126] Under a mixed economy system, Slovenia saw prosperity shoot forward.[127] The free economy also came with less political restrictions. This led to an earlier rise of Slovene nationalism. This form of nationalism became so popular that the Communist Party in Belgrade started trying to bring the Slovenes back into line.[128]

While Yugoslavia began its slow collapse under the socialist economic model, Slovenia was doing relatively well. This also increased the feelings of nationalism and separatism rooted in their strong cultural identity. People were asking why should wealthy Slovenia have to subsidize the rest of the country. Oftentimes, more than the Slovenes wanted, the tax revenue would be sent south to help the rest of the country. The goals of the independence movement, according to the new Slovene state, were both to control the armed forces as well as the

121   University of Central Arkansas, "Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia."
122   Kirsten Lundberg, "CIA and the Fall of the Soviet Empire: The Politics of "Getting It Right," Central Intelligence Agency, accessed July 20, 2024, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/19950601.pdf.
123   Aline Sierp, *Democratic Change in Central and Eastern Europe 1990* (Luxembourg: European Parliament, 1997), https://www.europarl.europa.eu/EPRS/EPRS_STU_538881_Democratic_change_EN.pdf.
124   Stephen G. Glazer, "The Brezhnev Doctrine," *International Lawyer* 5, no. 1 (1971): 169-179, https://scholar.smu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4221&context=til.
125   Lundberg. "CIA and the Fall of the Soviet Empire: The Politics of "Getting It Right."
126   "Slovenia," Central Intelligence Agency, accessed July 25, 2024, https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/slovenia/.
127   "Historical development," European Commission, last modified November 27, 2023, https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/slovenia/historical-development.
128   European Commission, "Historical development."

economic resources of the country.[129] Yugoslavia did provide autonomy to Slovenia. But Slovenia saw the question of the control of the army and economic resources most disruptive.

Like the rest of Eastern Europe, Slovenia went through its own Slovene Spring. The loosening of the already loose restrictions on political speech led to large protests. Many of these protests were supported by the local communists but hated by the Yugoslav Communist Party in Belgrade. In May 1990, Slovenia held liberal multi-party elections. The ruling communist parties, as well as their allied socialist comrades, accepted the elections. However, the opposition DEMOS bloc, composed of the liberal democrats from the center-left and center-right, won the elections with 53 percent of the vote.[130] Milan Kučan, who was a former communist official, but was now on the side of the democratic parties, was elected President.[131] However, Milan Kučan was the second choice, the first candidate of the DEMOS bloc was an anti-communist exile.[132] This means the Slovene people rejected total radical change and chose to reform moderately. Also, a man named Janez Jansa, a victim of YNA persecution in 1988, just two years earlier, became defense minister.[133] This probably would influence the steadfast nature of the Slovene resistance.

It was on September 28, 1990, when the Slovenians first made moves to ensure their security. Passing a constitutional amendment, the Slovenian government laid claim to all the militia, police, and armed forces within its territory.[134] On December 26, the independence referendum was held, and around 88.5 percent of eligible voters voted in favor of independence. The day of December 26 is celebrated as Slovenian Independence Day in modern days.[135] Slovenia

would declare independence, alongside Croatia, on June 25, 1991.[136] Because the Slovenians had prepared for over a year, they waited for the inevitable Yugoslavian response.

In Belgarde, dismay overtook the leaders. Most politicians and military generals were opposed to Slovenian independence. Most of them advocated for crushing the independence movement with force. Although the Slovenians had support from most of the country, there were pockets of troops, mostly at the borders and on military bases, who supported the Yugoslavian central government. After June 25, it was decided the Yugoslav army, the JNA, would intervene.

The Fifth Military District, based in Zagreb, Croatia, was just across the border from Slovenia. Its primary job was to defend the border from attack from the West. The Fifth Military District had responsibility over both Slovenia and large areas of Croatia. The Fifth would be called upon by Belgarde to put down the nascent independence movement. On June 25, the JNA began its operations, sending the Fifth into Slovenia, heading towards the capital, Ljubljana.[137] The 13th and 10th corps headed towards the border with Italy and Austria.[138] Around 22,300 JNA soldiers were lined up to fight.[139] The goal was to control the border crossings with other countries and capture the capital of Slovenia. Belgrade also cut off Slovenia financially from the world, imposing a blockade and taking their bank assets.[140] It was assumed this show of force would end the rebellion and end the independence movement.

On June 27, 1991, the military commanders called the President of Slovenia, Milan Kučan, as well as his advisors. They informed him the Army would take control of the roads, border crossing, and the airport.[141] However, fearing this was

129 "Path to Slovene State," Government of the Republic of Slovenia, accessed July 26, 2024. http://www.slovenija2001.gov.si/10years/path/.
130 Government of the Republic of Slovenia. "Path to Slovene State."
131 European Commission, "Historical development."
132 Government of the Republic of Slovenia. "Path to Slovene State."
133 Government of the Republic of Slovenia. "Path to Slovene State."
134 "History of Ten-Day War (Slovenian Independence War) - Timeline," History Draft, accessed July 29, 2024. https://historydraft.com/story/ten-day-war-slovenian-independence-war/timeline/335.
135 "Independence and Unity Day," Government of Republic of Slovenia, December 22, 2023, https://www.gov.si/en/news/2023-12-22-independence-and-unity-day/.
136 Government of Republic of Slovenia, "Independence and Unity Day."
137 "Slovenia: The Ten Day War, June-July 1991," Library of Congress, accessed July 29, 2024, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g6841sm.gct00210/?sp=1&st=image&r=0.287,0.173,0.651,0.311,0.
138 Library of Congress, "Slovenia: The Ten Day War, June-July 1991."
139 Igor Bavcar and Janez Jansa, "War for Slovenia 1991," War for Slovenia, accessed July 29, 2024, http://www.slovenija2001.gov.si/10years/path/war/.
140 European Commission, "Historical development."
141 History Draft. "History of Ten-Day War (Slovenian Independence War) - Timeline."

only the beginning of a larger crackdown Milan Kučan and the rest of the government decided on armed resistance. In total, there were 16,000 loyal defense forces, but as the war continued, this number rose to 36,000.[142] They were composed of the Slovenian Territorial Defense Forces or the TD.

As the JNA troops pushed towards the border, the battlefield fell into night and confusion. Civilians built weak barricades to stop the advance of the JNA, but were pushed aside with no shots fired.[143] The Slovenian TD shot down two JNA helicopters and skirmished with the enemy. Both sides lost minor casualties. However, when the sun rose on June 28th, the JNA was left out in the cold.[144] Most of the border crossings and other strategic points were in the hands of the Slovenians.

This meant the JNA would have to attack the Slovenian TD in open daylight. That day, most of the assaults against the TD's positions failed miserably, and any JNA units were caught in the open and forced to surrender or were destroyed.[145] On June 28, the Slovenian TD captured the JNA arms depot at Borovnica, allowing the resupply of their troops and denying the same to the JNA.[146]

However, neither side could decisively take the advantage. Neither side had won yet. JNA forces were still controlling the roads and bases in Slovenia. The Slovenian TD controlled the border crossings, airports, and most of the cities.[147] The battle was at a stalemate. On June 29, a short ceasefire was declared, but the situation for the JNA units was getting worse by the minute.[148] They were surrounded and cut off from all supply and support.

On July 1, 1991, the JNA tried to change its strategy. Instead of fighting a limited war, the JNA wanted to launch a full-scale attack and sweep away the Slovenian TD. Then they could occupy the whole country and put down the revolt. However, the Yugoslav Presidency, held at the time by a Serbian named Borisav Jović, refused to authorize this plan. The JNA Chief of Staff, General Blagoje Adžić, was furious and publicly denounced "the federal organs [which] continually hampered us, demanding negotiations while they [the Slovenians] were attacking us with all means".[149]

With the capture of the weapons at Borovnica and the airport at Brnik, as well as captured Yugoslav tanks and recruits

142 Bavcar and Jansa, "War for Slovenia 1991."
143 Bavcar and Jansa, "War for Slovenia 1991."
144 History Draft, "History of Ten-Day War (Slovenian Independence War) - Timeline."
145 Bavcar and Jansa, "War for Slovenia 1991."
146 Bavcar and Jansa, "War for Slovenia 1991."
147 History Draft. "History of Ten-Day War (Slovenian Independence War) - Timeline."
148 Igor Bavcar and Janez Jansa "War for Slovenia 1991."
149 History Draft. "History of Ten-Day War (Slovenian Independence War) - Timeline."

Ten-Day Wat
Credit: Peter Božič

reinforced the Slovenian TD. On July 2, the Slovenians launched their decisive assault. Slovenian TD tanks struck the JNA at the Krakvoski forest, surrounding the JNA units there. By the end of the day, Slovenian TD forces captured the Šentilj, Fernetici, and Gorjansko border crossings, taking prisoners and equipment as they went. The next day, the Gornja Radgona border crossing was captured as well.[150]

By July 4, 1991, the Slovenian TD had secured every border crossing, both in the West and leading into Croatia and Yugoslavia. The JNA lost any offensive ability, and most of its units were surrounded and cut off. The Fifth Military District was practically destroyed as a fighting force. A complete ceasefire was enacted and the JNA began the slow process of withdrawing all of its soldiers and equipment out of the new and free Slovenia.

Overall, the campaign, done in 10 days, was a complete disaster for the JNA. They failed all of their objectives and lost an entire military District, around 20,000 to 25,000 troops, to boot. Although this show of force was to calm the tensions across Yugoslavia, the failure of the JNA emboldened other groups around the Federation to seek their independence. As JNA troops retreated in disarray, and crossed the border into Croatia, another independence group, this time in Croatia, would rise.[151]

Croatian Conflict

On July 4, a ceasefire was declared in Slovenia. JNA units began the long process of retreating into Yugoslavia. However, emboldened by the resistance shown by the Slovenens, the Croatians next door saw their chance. Croatia had already declared its independence. Watching the conflict between the JNA and Slovenian TD, all sides came together to slow down the pace of conflict.

No one wanted the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia.

All sides, Croatian, Slovenian, and Serb, agreed to sit down and discuss at the table. In what would be called the Brioni Agreements, Croatia agreed to wait three more months before leaving Yugoslavia.[152] Also, to stop conflict like this from happening in the future, The Brioni Agreement included clauses that advocated for peaceful negotiations between all parties.[153]

Primarily, the goal of the Brioni Agreement was to ensure the JNA would withdraw from Slovenia and was not a ceasefire for the Croatian areas. The ideal would be a negotiated departure, where Croatia would not have to undergo more conflict like before, but that was not likely. The fighting in Croatia had already begun alongside the fighting in Slovenia, albeit by ethnic militias and not the JNA. So, the Brioni Agreements also created a CSCE (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe) Observer Mission. The goal of the CSCE mission was to observe the withdrawal of the JNA and prevent any more conflict from breaking out. The Observers were not armed, nor were authorized to do anything except observe the peace process.[154] Overall, the withdrawal of the JNA from Slovenia was peaceful, and there were no incidents, major or minor.

Although the Brioni Agreements were a step towards peace in Slovenia, Croatia was already turning up in flames. In 1990, Croatian nationalist Franco Tudjman won the elections and was appointed President. Kicked out of the Communist Party and thrown in prison for his ultra-nationalism, Franco Tudjam advocated for a Croatian State. His vision was an ethnically pure Croatia, however, and was kind of a Ustase genocide denier.[155] This is why he was thrown in jail and prosecuted by the Communist regime.

Franco Tudjman and his rhetoric struck fear in the Serbian population in Croatia. In total, 76 percent of the 4.6 million people in Croatia were Croats.[156] On the other hand, 12 percent of the population, about half a million people, were ethnic Serbs. Tudjman policies, which involved removing

150   Igor Bavcar and Janez Jansa "War for Slovenia 1991."
151   Igor Bavcar and Janez Jansa "War for Slovenia 1991."
152   "Brioni Agreement signed," OSCE, July 7, 1991, https://www.osce.org/node/58326.
153   "Joint Declaration of the EC Troica and the Parties directly concerned with the Yugoslav Crisis (Brioni Accord)," UN Peacemaker, July 1991, https://peacemaker.un.org/node/8996.
154   OSCE, "Brioni Agreement signed."
155   "Franjo Tudman," President of the Republic of Croatia, accessed September 28, 2024, https://www.predsjednik.hr/en/bivsi-predsjednici/franjo-tudman/.
156   Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: An Approaching Crisis."

Serbs from positions of power and replacing them with Croats, seemed to confirm this.[157]

Across the border, Serbian nationalism was growing as well. Siloban Milosevic, a communist as well as a Serbian nationalist, was rising to power. Although he was an economic administrator and held a degree in law, Milosevic rose to power on a populist-style political campaign.[158] He became the President of Serbia in 1989 after the Serbian Assembly removed his opponent from power. The President of Serbia is separate from the Head of Yugoslavia, as per the Federalist system. Thus, Milosevic faced some opposition from the more mainstream Yugoslav government.[159]

While some elements of the Yugoslav Federal government were more moderate, like President Borisav Jović, Milanovic was more of a hawk. He believed in a greater Serbia. In 1988, before he was elected President he succeeded in replacing the leadership of the provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo with his Serbian supporters.[160] His actions and rhetoric led to anti-Serbian backlash across Yugoslavia, particularly in Croatia.

Both sides were amplifying their opposition to each other, and neither side could make a lasting deal with each other. Rhetoric and words led to violence and threats. On May 14, 1990, a year before the fighting had begun in Slovenia and Croatia, the weapons of the TD (territorial defense) of Croatia, in Croat-majority regions, were taken away by the JNA.[161] The Serbs feared Croatia more than Slovenia because around half a million Serbs were present. This meant that, unlike the Slovenians, the Croats would have a harder time beating the JNA in the coming war.

More protests and anti-Croat and anti-Serbian rhetoric were heard from both sides. Both Milosevic and Tudjman spun stories of the other side's discrimination and brutality. On July 25, 1990, an unofficial Serbian assembly met and decided to stand up for the Serbian people in Croatia - this would later lead to the formation of the SAO (Serbian Autonomous Oblast) Krajina.[162] Oblast means state or province, and Krajina means border.

It was in March of 1991 before the fighting had begun in

157   "World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples - Croatia," Minority Rights Group International, last modified July 2008, http://www.refworld.org/docid/4954ce1ec.html.
158   Michael Scharf, *The Cambridge Companion to International Criminal Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016): 295-311, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107280540.
159   Scharf, *The Cambridge Companion to International Criminal Law.*
160   Scharf, *The Cambridge Companion to International Criminal Law.*
161   "History of Croatian War of Independence - Timeline," History Draft, accessed August 2, 2024, https://historydraft.com/story/croatian-war-of-independence/timeline/336.
162   History Draft. "History of Croatian War of Independence - Timeline."

Conflict in Slovenia Map

Credit: Central Intelligence Agency

Slovenia, that violence broke out in Croatia. This was to be a border region under Yugoslav and Serbian control. According to Milan Martić, one of the leaders of the SAO Krajina, both sides were responsible for the violence, but the Serbian side chose to fire first, killing a Croatian police officer.[163] While the fighting in Slovenia was done by the JNA and the Slovenian TD, the fighting in Croatia was done by ethnic militias and the SAO Krajina. However, after the defeat of the JNA in Slovenia, the JNA prepared to focus on Croatia and work with the Serbian militias present.

Even so, the JNA was weakened by Slovenia. Many people thought the JNA was only a puppet of Milosevic and the ambitions of a Greater Serbia. The JNA that invaded Croatia was only a shadow of its former self - many Slovenes, Croats, Bosnians, and Macedonians had gone home, not wanting to fight for Greater Serbia. There were about 145,000 troops in the JNA moving into Croatia.[164] This is in addition to the SAO Krajina Militias, whose numbers are harder to pin down.

On the Croatian side, there are an estimated 200,000 TD soldiers, with more being recruited by the day.[165] While the Croatian TD lost most of its heavy equipment to the JNA in 1990, stocks of small arms remain. In addition, both Slovenia and Croatia are destinations for arms flows.[166] The JNA leadership has repeatedly called out the suppliers of Croatia and Slovenia as "Western Imperialists", however, it is more likely private weapon dealers are supplying the Croatian troops. Western Powers have rejected requests to buy weapons, however, Hungary has supplied a couple thousand rifles to the Croats.[167]

In the time before the Brioni Agreement, Serbian forces took over a third of Croatian territory for the new SAO Krajina.[168] Now the JNA and Serbian militias are prepared to throw their full might against the new Croatian state. While small skirmishes still occur, the major offensives have not fired. Offensives are planned, by the JNA, to strike towards the coast and the capital to cut Croatia into two. Now, it is August 1991, and the world waits. The JNA is curled into a fist ready to strike. The question is where and when will the blow fall.

Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are composed of 17 goals shared by UN member states and decided upon in 2015.[169] The United Nations (UN) agreed to meet these goals and targets by 2030. Indeed, the Sustainable Development Goals and the targets were not actively discussed at the international level in 1991. Nevertheless, these goals and targets also share the objective of upholding the standards for international peace and security. The idea of no poverty (Goal 1) or clean water (Goal 6) is universal and does not need to be codified to be on the committee's mind. But when considering the UN Security Council's profile and its mandate, SDG 16 - Peace Justice, and Strong Institutions should be at the forefront in the delegate's minds.[170]

The core of SDG 16 - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions is a basic need for stability and security. Peace is the UN's primary goal. The UN's predecessor, League of Nations, was founded after the First World War to prevent the ignition of global conflict and wars from happening.[171] However, the League of Nations failed to tackle anything about the aggression of Germany, Japan, Italy, and the USSR, making the League less effective. The main criticism levied against the United Nations that continues today is that the UN does nothing.

This is an opportunity for the international community to reassert international peace and security. Sometimes peace requires strength and toughness. Other times, peace requires

163 "Milan Martić Testimony," International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, February 15, 2006, https://www.icty.org/x/cases/martic/trans/en/060215ED.htm.
164 "Yugoslavia: Military Dynamics of a Potential Civil War," Central Intelligence Agency, March 1991, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/1991-03-01.pdf.
165 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: Military Dynamics of a Potential Civil War."
166 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: Military Dynamics of a Potential Civil War."
167 Central Intelligence Agency, "Yugoslavia: Military Dynamics of a Potential Civil War."
168 "The Conflicts," International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, accessed August 2, 2024, https://www.icty.org/en/about/what-former-yugoslavia/conflicts.
169 "The 17 Goals," United Nations, accessed August 10th, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/goals.
170 "Goal 16," United Nations, accessed October 8, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16#targets_and_indicators.
171 Office of the Historian, "The League of Nations, 1920," United States Department of State, accessed September 13, 2024, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/league.

careful diplomacy and compromise. It is the job of the delegates in the UN Security Council to advocate for and approve methods to accomplish the goal of peace.

Justice is the second tenet of the 16th SDG.[172] War often generates irreversible consequences and geopolitical ramifications during and after the engagement. Ethnic conflicts in particular are magnets for war crimes and always carry the potential for genocide. There will always be those who call for the simple solution of "kill them all." The UN was founded on the principle of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[173] "Barbarous" acts resulting in the "outraged conscience" must be condemned and should be stopped.[174] As Target 16.3 highlights, ensuring equal access to justice for all populations also applies to the promotion of the rule of law and its enforcement in conflict resolution mechanisms. The rights and dignities of any and every citizen of the world must be protected.[175] Justice requires the UN Security Council to set up some way of ensuring war crimes and genocide are prevented, as well as prosecuted if they do occur.

Last, but not least, there are strong institutions. Strong institutions should be the endgame of the Security Council, so to speak. Strong institutions prevent war and keep the peace. Strong institutions promote justice and stop crimes. In short, Strong institutions are the guarantee of peace and justice, as well as the other SDGs out there. While not foolproof, strong institutions are the best tool in the arsenal of democracy.

Strong institutions are the most elusive of the SDGs.[176] To impose strong institutions from afar seems like a paradox. Externally imposed institutions and rules are always weak. As Target 16.10 and 16.a spotlight, nation-building is necessary to create strong institutions.[177] It is crucial for the international community and countries involved to reaffirm and ensure access to information and protect fundamental freedoms. This would further enhance the national institution's capabilities

to prevent violence and uphold the idea of justice. However, it is important to note that its enforcement is fickle and often subject to failure. Afghanistan and Iraq, for example, are in tatters. Syria is back to where it started. And the Central African Republic shows a high level of corruption and weakness.

Yet there are examples of success stories. Japan and Germany were rehabilitated after the Second World War. Despite being demolished, they shed their fascist ideas and embraced democracy. More often than not, strong state-building comes from within. The reconstruction of the American South, which arguably is still ongoing, is an example. Nationalists in China and India built their country from warlord rule and colonial rule respectively to strong centralized states.

Bloc Analysis

Point of Division

The UN Security Council is primarily responsible for tackling the pressing issues related to international peace and security.[178] The Council's agenda generally focuses on monitoring the situation in the conflict zone and discussing the feasibility of enforcement measures if necessary such as economic sanctions, arms embargo, severance of diplomatic relations, and direct intervention in some cases.[179]

Member states of the UN Security Council may show differences in what is the optimal course of action for the international community to discuss the conflict, such as the situation in Yugoslavia. Croatian and Serbian nationalism, the turbulent dynamics in the Balkan region, and the final years of the Cold War are the core tenets that explain what makes the situation in Yugoslavia complex. Nevertheless, the level of disruptiveness of issues surrounding the volatile situation in Yugoslavia and the Balkan region is based on how the UN Security Council interprets the military conflict in Croatia and

172   United Nations, "Goal 16."
173   "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," United Nations, December 10, 1948, https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf.
174   United Nations, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights."
175   United Nations, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights."
176   United Nations, "Goal 16."
177   United Nations, "Goal 16."
178   "What is the Security Council?," United Nations, accessed October 7, 2024, https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/what-security-council.
179   United Nations, "What is the Security Council?."

Slovenia and their collateral socio-economic impacts.

The Proactive Bloc of the UN Security Council would likely convince the UN Security Council to consider direct action to mediate the volatile situation in Croatia and Slovenia. This bloc views the situation in Yugoslavia as an interstate conflict based on the evaluation of the status of Croatian independence and the complex nature behind the ethnic conflicts. The Reactive Bloc would not necessarily view the status of the Croatian conflict as a major clash point in the situation in Yugoslavia. Instead, this bloc would prioritize the United Nations mission as the international community and argue for a relatively moderate approach. The Non-interventionist Bloc of the UN Security Council would argue that the international community's intervention to mediate the conflict would generate negative consequences and instead opt for limited actions if necessary. Ultimately, how the different blocs coordinate with each other would be paramount to ensure the UN Security Council tackles the situation appropriately.

The Proactive Party

This bloc primarily consists of Western countries with more interventionist mindsets as well as any other state with a stake in the maintenance of the international world order. First, this bloc views the conflict as state-on-state, and as such, international laws like the Geneva Convention and UN Intervention mandate apply. Such conflict is illegal, in the clearest sense of International Law, unless sanctioned by the UN Security Council itself or in actual self-defense. This means Serbia is acting in aggression, violating international law. Croatia is acting in self-defense.

This bloc accepts Croatian independence as given and *de jure* (according to law), thus Serbian aggression via the JNA (Yugoslav Army) is unlawful. It is not needed that actual recognition be given by the country in this bloc, rather it is the thought that matters. For example, a country may not give recognition because of a strategic reason, or not to appear as adventuristic. But this country still holds very proactive and interventionist values.

Furthermore, this bloc considers the UN Security Council should step in and intervene before any more violence occurs. Historically, this has played out in Bosnia and Kosovo with the deployment of troops to prevent widespread violence and potential war crimes. Historically, these countries are the Western countries, with the United States Chief among them. The United States found itself with the support of the United Kingdom, Belgium, and France. These countries would later find themselves sued by Yugoslavia in 1990 for their actions.[1]

The Reactive Bloc

Relatively moderate, this bloc does not view the independence of Croatia as important to the resolution of the issue. The classification of the conflict is irrelevant for these countries. Instead, this bloc considers the United Nations and its mission a priority. International Law does apply, yet there must be restraint. The creation of buffer zones and small amounts of UN peacekeepers may be a solution, however, under no circumstances should the goal or result of the Security Council be the interjection of any more armed force into the region. Countries that are a part of this bloc see such action as provocative and not needed.

Even so, neither war crimes nor additional aggression should be tolerated. The UN must have its gaze set firmly on the conflict to prevent it from spiraling out of control. What sets the Reactive bloc separate from the Non-Interventionalist bloc will be their openness to arguments on humanitarian and ideological grounds calling for more intervention. Historically, the creation of cease-fire zones and very small amounts of peacekeepers was the goal of this bloc.

Countries that may find themselves in this bloc include Zaire, Zimbabwe, Democratic Yemen, Ecuador, Côte d'Ivoire, and India. These countries, while skeptical of open intervention, were more opposed to the ethnic cleansing and war crimes that broke out on both sides during the conflict. Romania is an interesting country on this issue. While Romania, via its ownership of Transylvania, has a claim on Western Banat. Banat is the Romanian word for a border region, similar to the Serbian *Krajina*. Banat was the military border between

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1   "Legality of Use of Force (Yugoslavia v. United States of America)," International Court of Justice, accessed August 6, 2024, https://www.icj-cij.org/case/114.

the Hungarians and the Turks in the 17th century. After the First World War and the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Banat region was divided into two. This conflict faded into irrelevance, however, and the Romanians and Yugoslavs maintained very close relations during the Cold War.[2] Historically, Banat is a violent region, yet it is no longer an issue. Most Romanians oppose intervention, even after the overthrow of Nicolae Ceausescu. Romania in 1991 was a democracy, and anxious to please the West, allowed NATO jets and bombers to fly out of Romanian airfields, even though the popular opinion was, on balance, against intervention.

In short, Romania is in an interesting position. It has the same claims on Serbia that Serbia has on Croatia - historical land - yet chooses the peaceful option. Revanchists, that is, people who want to claim "lost" historical land, do not exist as a political force in Romania. Delegates of this bloc should consider the different positions of the countries when convincing the Security Council on such decisions.

The Non-interventionalists

This bloc is made up of the countries that reject the presumptions of the first. Either they believe the conflict, by definition, is an internal issue within the boundaries of Yugoslavia, or reject the international framework for multilateral intervention in any conflict whatsoever. A combination of some form of both beliefs is likely, as well as sufficient, but not necessary to be included in this bloc. Either belief, held strongly by a country, will do.

Countries that traditionally align with the eastern or emerging powers bloc, like Russia, China, and Cuba, will belong to this bloc. Overall, this bloc does not support UN intervention in any shape, size, or form. They view the smallest introduction of the UN into the conflict as futile and, perhaps, provocative. In other words, intervention at best does nothing, and at worst makes the conflict spiral out of control. Nonetheless, this bloc may be open to compromises with limited actions, yet differ in their receptivity to changes on the ground.

Of the non-interventionists, Russia may turn in the other direction. That is, eschew non-interventionism, and advocate for the Serbian cause, Russia and Serbia are very close allies, both militarily and culturally. Countries like Cuba and China, as well as states like India and Ecuador, do not want to see more conflict. Many Russians see this as a proxy conflict, where the West is moving its pawns, and Russia must play. Historically, Russia allowed the West to intervene because it was bankrupt and facing economic collapse. Gorbachev and Yeltsin were both more concerned about internal affairs and liberalization to focus on a war in the Balkans. However, a more determined and active Russia may make things much more complicated for the West and the UN as a whole.

Committee Mission

The Security Council has a clear mandate to maintain international peace and stability. Yet in such a complicated region, the room for long-term peacebuilding and conflict prevention is limited. Two people must learn to live alongside each other whether in the same country or separate countries. Croats live in Serbia, and Serbs live in Croatia, there is no way around it. Both sides are willing to fight, and keep fighting, for what they think are their homes and their people. There is no way around that.

The UN Security Council is the best equipped, and arguably, the only committee equipped with the means and the mandate to resolve this issue. The primary mission and mandate of the UNSC is the creation and maintenance of peace and stability.[3] Founded in 1946, the UN Security Council has 15 members, five of which, the US, UK, France, China, and Russia, are permanent members and possess unchecked veto power over any of the proceedings.[4] Delegates of the UN Security Council should take into account the possible power imbalances the veto power could generate between permanent members and non-permanent members before agreeing on any actions on the situation in Yugoslavia.

Effectively, the Security Council is the executive branch of the

2 Ana Lozici, Cornelia Petroman, Elena Claudia Constantin, Diana Marin, and Oliver Schill, "Traditions in Banat," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 197 (2015): 730-736, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.157.
3 "Security Council," United Nations, accessed August 8, 2024, https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en.
4 United Nations, "Security Council."

United Nations. While General Assemblies and Specialized Committees will pass laws, and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) will make rulings, only the Security Council has the power to enforce these decisions.[5] Chapter VI of the UN Charter empowers the UNSC to call upon both parties and act as a mediator in disputes.[6] If this fails, Chapter VII authorizes the UNSC, with the consent of its members, to take more assertive actions.[7] These usually include sanctions, embargos, and the active deployment of peacekeepers to rectify the situation. Sanctions are also authorized by Article 41 of the UN Charter.[8] Furthermore, the UN is the only body that can legitimize the use of force, except in cases of self-defense, per Article 51.[9]

It is highly recommended that the delegates of the UN Security Council unearth any grounds for cooperation, if not guide the committee to do so. The military conflict in Croatia and Slovenia and the collateral socioeconomic impacts include a multitude of issues that the committee needs to address. Ultimately, it is the UN Security Council's choice to decide the order of business to adequately address the situation in Yugoslavia with the primary focus on constructing policies and agreements to mitigate the crisis in Yugoslavia.

5   Lindsay Maizland and Richard Haass, "The UN Security Council," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified September 9, 2024, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/un-security-council.
6   Maizland and Haass. "The UN Security Council."
7   Maizland and Haass. "The UN Security Council."
8   Maizland and Haass. "The UN Security Council."
9   Maizland and Haass. "The UN Security Council."

TOPIC B:
THE GULF WAR (1991)

Introduction

As the Cold War comes to a close at the beginning of the 1990s, the world seems to be experiencing a transition of the paradigm of global politics.[1] The Berlin Wall has fallen, the Warsaw Pact is slowly crumbling, and the USSR has declared it will no longer intervene in the affairs of Eastern Europe.[2] The geopolitical impact of the final stages of the Cold War goes beyond the Iron Curtain. Even before the final years of the Cold War, there were tensions over the Persian Gulf, which made the Middle East region highly volatile.[3] The Iranian Revolution in 1979 gradually changed the regional dynamics of the Middle East.[4] The top-to-down change in the Iranian regime from monarchy to theocratic state led to the gradual change of Iran's regional influence in the Middle East. While the Sunni-Shia divide of Islam may not be an explicit cause of the pivot of regional dynamics, it helps the understanding of the early stages of the Lebanese civil war and different proxy warfare that continue to the present day.[5]

Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 led to rapid change in the regional dynamics in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East. In a matter of days, he has brought the whole country under his control. Reports are made that Hussein has weapons of mass destruction. Additional reports alleging the circumstances of mass executions and torture in Kuwait.[6] The United States has stepped in to protect Saudi Arabia, a neighbor of Iraq. The United Nations has pledged its support for the Kuwaiti cause and has condemned Hussein's regime for the invasion. Several Western leaders are calling for a military retaliation, but other countries prefer comprehensive economic sanctions. However, some question the motivation of the West, claiming they are more interested in controlling oil in the region than protecting the people of Kuwait.

Under the mandate granted by the Charter of the United Nations, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has a responsibility to maintain international peace and security.[7] With a diverse composition of states, many different interests are represented on the Council. Before the UN Security Council can discuss the possible action plan, it must navigate through the complex dynamics of the Middle East. The geopolitical factors behind the scenes include not only the rise of Iran. Some of the Arab OPEC members imposed the oil embargo in 1973 to express their dissatisfaction with the Western countries' support to Israeli forces during the Arab-Israeli war in the same year.[8] The long-term economic effect of the 1973 oil embargo extends to the shock in the global petroleum market, and the oil price's high volatility further accentuated the ignition of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980.[9]

Delegates of the UN Security Council should take into account the high instability of the global oil market and the geopolitical dynamics of the Middle East. The UN Security Council could recognize that it may be challenging for the international community to offer a conclusive solution in light of the situation in the Persian Gulf. The future trajectory of the Middle East and the Persian Gulf is still yet to be seen.

1 Joshua Sifrinson, "The Malta Summit and US-Soviet relations testing the waters amidst stormy seas," The Wilson Center, last modified August 12, 1989, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/the-malta-summit-and-us-soviet-relations-testing-the-waters-amidst-stormy-seas.
2 Andrei Kolesnikov, "Gorbachev's Revolution," Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center, August 31, 2022, https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2022/08/gorbachevs-revolution?lang=en.
3 Lorena De Vita, "The Cold War in the Middle East: Then and Now," Atlantisch Perspectief 43, no. 6 (2019): 34-37, https://www.jstor.org/stable/48581547.
4 Suzanne Maloney and Keian Razipour, "The Iranian revolution–A timeline of events," Brookings, January 24, 2019, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-iranian-revolution-a-timeline-of-events/.
5 Hamzeh Hadad, "Proxy battles: Iraq, Iran, and the turmoil in the Middle East," European Council on Foreign Relations, April 16, 2024, https://ecfr.eu/publication/proxy-battles-iraq-iran-and-the-turmoil-in-the-middle-east/.
6 Patrick E. Tyler, "Kuwaitis Scale Back Resistance Effort," The Washington Post, October 5, 1990, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1990/10/05/kuwaitis-scale-back-resistance-effort/5f04b295-cb4b-455f-88ef-783191343cea/.
7 "What is the Security Council?," United Nations, accessed October 15, 2024, https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/what-security-council.
8 "Oil Embargo, 1973-1974," Officer of the Historian, accessed July 22, 2024, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/oil-embargo.
9 Ranj Alaaldin, "How the Iran-Iraq war will shape the region for decades to come," Brookings, October 9, 2020, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-the-iran-iraq-war-will-shape-the-region-for-decades-to-come/.

And the UN Security Council should recognize the gravity of the mandate granted by the international community.

The UN Security Council's primary steps would focus on further evaluating the real impact of the control factors of the Gulf War, such as the status of the global oil market and the status quo of the Middle East.[10]

History and Description of the Issue

The Ottoman Empire

The fall of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I (WWI) was a landmark event in the history of Arab affairs due to the emergence of rival groups in the region. The Ottoman Empire ruled over most of the Middle East and the Arab Peninsula for the best part of half a millennium. Emerging as a regional power in the 15th century, the Ottoman Empire was a vast, multi-ethnic state, comprising Turks, Arabs, Armenians, Greeks, and many others. Though fraught with internal division for much of its history, the Empire acted as a unifying presence in the region. This was largely because the majority of those in the Empire practiced Islam as their religion.[11]

In the late 19th century, there was a rise in nationalist movements across the Empire, such as the Kurdish and Arab independence movements.[12] These ethnic conflicts culminated in the Great Arab Revolt of 1916-1918, in which Arabs across the Arabian peninsula, covertly supported by the British, rebelled against Ottoman rule.[13] In exchange for rebelling, the British had promised to help the Arab forces establish a unified Arab state. However, they broke this promise with the Sykes-Picot agreement.[14]

The Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 was an agreement adopted between the United Kingdom and France to divide the territories of the waning Ottoman Empire. Jointly negotiated by British diplomat Sir Mark Sykes and his French counterpart François Georges-Picot, the agreement aimed to establish spheres of influence and direct control in the Middle East.[15] This produced borders that had little to no resemblance to boundaries that had existed before. These artificial constructs led to France controlling modern-day Lebanon, Syria, and parts of southeastern Türkiye, while Britain took over Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine. This secret arrangement was later endorsed by Russia. Even though due to the collapse of their war effort in 1917, their claims in the region were never actioned.

The particulars of the agreement were made public by Leon Trotsky in November 1917, inciting considerable anger among the Arab people. Promised independence and self-determination in exchange for their support against the Ottomans as a condition of the Great Arab Revolt, they believed it would lead to an independent Arab state potentially spanning the entire Middle East.[16] The significance of the betrayal is that it was not just directed at the Western powers, but also sowed seeds of distrust within the emerging Arab nationalist movements. Despite the cracks beginning to show in the unified Arab movement, the 1920 Iraq Revolt drew together various ethnic and religious groups in Iraq, including Sunni and Shia Muslims and even non-Arab (i.e. Kurdish) factions, in a rare moment of unity against the British mandate.

The borders drawn up by the Sykes-Picot Agreement significantly influenced the modern Middle East. These borders were established with limited consideration for the existing ethnic, tribal, and religious divisions, which has contributed to various conflicts and tensions over time.[17] States such as modern-day Yemen were cut in two, while states in the Persian Gulf such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were amalgamated together for strategic benefit. Countries

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10 "Ottoman Empire," History, last modified June 10, 2024, https://www.history.com/topics/middle-east/ottoman-empire.
11 "History, "Ottoman Empire."
12 "History, "Ottoman Empire."; C. J. Edmonds, "The Kurds of Iraq," *Middle East Journal* 11, no. 1 (1957): 52-62, https://www.jstor.org/stable/4322870; Louise Fawcett, *International Relations of the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 245-268.
13 Matthew Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East* (London: Routledge, 1999), https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203044919.
14 "The Sykes-Picot Agreement: 1916," Lillian Goldman Law Library, accessed October 15, 2024, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/sykes.asp.
15 Lillian Goldman Law Library, "The Sykes-Picot Agreement: 1916."
16 Tariq Tell, "Sykes-Picot Agreement," International Encyclopedia of the First World War, last modified February 27, 2017, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/sykes-picot-agreement/.
17 Tell, "Sykes-Picot Agreement."
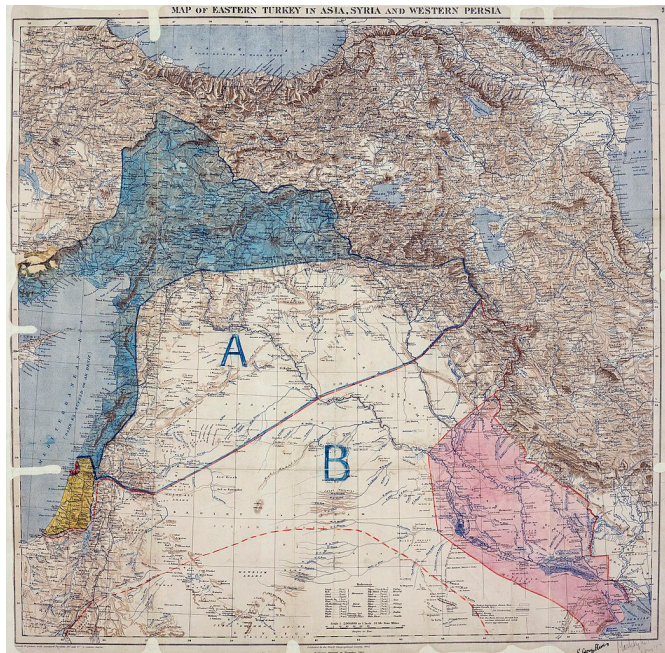
Map showing the proposed partition of the Ottoman Empire by the French (A, blue) and the British (B, red)

Credit: The National Archives (United Kingdom)

such as Iraq and Syria were formed from a mosaic of diverse groups with differing interests. This presented ongoing challenges to regional stability and the efforts of nationalist leaders within these states, which capitalized on the desire for self-determination, helped to form artificial barriers that eventually led the Arab world to turn against itself.[18]

In this agreement, the British and the French jointly agreed to a partition of the Arab world that would instead produce multiple smaller Arab states that would further the European interests in the region.[19]

After the Ottomans signed an armistice with the Entente powers in October 1918, it was occupied by British, French, Italian, and Greek forces, and carved up into smaller states as per the Treaty of Sevres. Large chunks of what is now Türkiye were handed to Greece and an independent Armenian state. France received what is now Syria, and the British took control of Iraq, Palestine, and much of the rest of the peninsula.[20] Unhappy with this outcome, several revolts occurred in the

region, such as the 1920 Iraqi Revolt, unrest in the French Mandate for Syria and Lebanon, and the Turkish War of Independence from 1919 to 1923.[21] These conflicts were important steps towards a unified sense of anti-colonialism and Arab nationalism but were equally important in entrenching rivalries between neighboring Arab states.

Though the Iraqi revolt was not successful in obtaining complete independence from the British empire, it eventually led to the formation of a nominally independent Kingdom ruled by the Hashemite dynasty for nearly four decades.[22] Many of the smaller Gulf states, such as Kuwait, Oman, and the UAE, formed in their present states, though under British protection until the 1960s. There were attempts by the predecessor to the Saudi state -known as the Sultanate of Nejd-to annex Kuwait and unite Kuwait with the State of Iraq. But Kuwait remained nominally independent. During the postwar period, Kuwait was able to utilize its vast oil reserves to fund grand construction projects.[23] Throughout this period, the Iraqi government maintained that Kuwait was part of Iraq,

18 Tell, "Sykes-Picot Agreement."
19 Lillian Goldman Law Library, "The Sykes-Picot Agreement: 1916."
20 Eugene Rogan, *A Century After Sykes-Picot* (Cairo: The Cairo Review of Global Affairs, 2015), https://www.thecairoreview.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CR19-Rogan.pdf.
21 Rogan, *A Century After Sykes-Picot*; Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977): 340-372, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511614972.010.
22 Reeva S. Simon, "The Hashemite 'Conspiracy': Hashemite Unity Attempts, 1921-1958," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5, no. 3 (June 1974): 314-327, https://www.jstor.org/stable/162381.
23 John Slight, "Global War and its impact on the Gulf States of Kuwait and Bahrain, 1914-1918," *War and Society* 37, no. 1 (2018): 21-37. https://oro.open.ac.uk/50891/3/50891.pdf.

which led to multiple standoffs with both the British Empire and its fellow Arab states.

Arab Nationalism & Inter-Arab Relations in 1990

Inter-Arab relations constitute a complex web of political alliances and feuds, economic dependencies, and religious divides, underscored by a popular belief in pan-Arabism but overridden by the nativist and nationalistic agendas of many of the more authoritarian countries in the region. Arab states are often in a paradoxical state of arguing for uniting all Arabs, while wars rage across the region over issues of national sovereignty. Even issues that should be universally agreed on such as the State of Israel have recently come to divide the Arab world.

Though most of the borders of Arab states had solidified by the mid-1920s (with small exceptions such as Hatay in Syria, the independence of Israel, and the eventual unification of Yemen), the strategic importance of the Middle East in the Second World War led to a pledge by the British that independence for the Arab states was an appeal that "would not go unanswered."[24] The Iraqi prime minister at the time, Nuri al-Sa'id, offered a two-step proposal for Arab unity, eventually consisting of a union between Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine.[25] Though this proposal was disregarded before the League was ever established, it set the tone and demonstrated the pan-Arabic desires of many in the region.

In 1945, the foundational document of the Arab League was published.[26] The League, a multinational body eventually consisting of 22 members, committed its member states in March 1945 to "coordinating their political plans (…) to bind Arab states more closely together." Its original intentions were pan-Arabic, reflecting the views of much of the Arab population at the time, that the Arab world should be united into one state.

However, the statist (i.e., prioritizing the needs of the state) agendas of the member states quickly became more important, and the final chapter of the League presented a "significantly watered down" proposal instead for "co-operating between the member states (…) to safeguard their sovereignty."[27] By the time of the Israeli proclamation of independence in 1948, Arab states were openly disregarding the idea of a unified Arab state, and the losses of consecutive Arab-Israeli wars led to mutual mistrust and lack of confidence in each other by the Arab leaders.

The formation of the Arab League in 1945 symbolized a collective aspiration for unity and mutual support among Arab states. However, once this enthusiasm faded, the League became a less significant player in the region, described as "a product of the dilemma between state sovereignty and Arab nationalism."[28] Put more directly, as one young Syrian explained, "if we are to measure competence in terms of results and achievements (…) then the Arab League is not competent simply because they have not achieved anything."[29] The Arab League is seen by many as a room for debate amongst leaders but wielding no real power over individual states.

Hopes for a pan-Arab movement were revitalized in the late 1950s, with the meteoric rise of Gamal Abdel Nasser as Egypt's president and his attempts to unify the Middle East. These efforts culminated in the short-lived existence of the United Arab Republic, a political union between Egypt and Syria that quickly collapsed due to Syrian opposition. Furthermore, in 1964 steps were taken by the League to form a Unified Military Command to conduct joint defense operations and to act as a bulwark to perceived Israeli aggression. After Nasser died in 1970, most attempts at this unity collapsed, and the divisions between Arab states- especially religious quarrels (see chapters below)- made certain that the Middle East would say disunited.

Another important factor in inter-Arab relations was the

24 Cris E. Toffolo, *Global Organizations: The Arab League* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2008), https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=AkGPnoX49z8C&dq=Alexandria+Protocol&pg=PA34&redir_esc=y.
25 Toffolo, *Global Organizations: The Arab League.*
26 League of Arab States, "Charter of the Arab League," Refworld, March 22, 1945, https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3ab18.html.
27 "The Arab League," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified May 25, 2023, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/arab-league.
28 Farah Dakhlallah, "The League of Arab States and Regional Security: Towards and Arab Security Community?" *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 39, no. 3 (Dec 2012), https://www.jstor.org/stable/23525392.
29 Dag Henriksen and Ann Karin Larssen, *Political Rationale and International Consequences of the War in Libya* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016): 105-117, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198767480.003.0006.

normalization of relations between Israel and the Arab world. Despite a commitment amongst League members to present a unified front against Israel, following a humiliating Egyptian defeat in the 1967 six-day war pressure mounted on neighboring states to begin to normalize trade and diplomatic ties with Israel, culminating in the Egypt-Israel peace treaty of 1979. This led to Egypt losing its membership in the League for over a decade, and its headquarters being moved to Tunisia until the late 1980s.[30]

There were however continued efforts for cooperation within the League amongst smaller groups of states. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is the best example. An association of six of the wealthiest states in the Middle East, the GCC maintains a joint military force and fosters strong economic ties.[31] Fundamentally, desires for one unified Arab state peaked early in the 1950s and declined shortly afterward due to many factors. Firstly, the loss of multiple wars against Israel, and the lack of a united front against the state, led to mutual mistrust between member states, as well as a belief that the League's goal from the outset of preventing the establishment of an Israeli state could not be achieved, undermining the League's credibility. Furthermore, the statist agendas of the member states of the League proved more significant for national leaders than the pan-Arab movement.[32]

This problem was largely caused by the Europeans' often arbitrary partitioning of the Arab world, leading to nationalist sentiments forming within the Arab world until these national sentiments ultimately became triumphant over the feeling of "Arabness" that was so strong in the late 1910s. Finally, infighting within the League proved that more than just opposing unification, some member states actively sought conflict with one another. It took until 1991 for this conflict to burst into full-scale warfare, but the case of Operation Vantage in 1961 demonstrates that inter-Arab conflict has had

the potential to break into war for decades.[33]

An important alliance in the region is the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), a political and economic union of six large oil-producing states in the Gulf.[34] Comprising 15 percent of the Arab world's military manpower, and 60 percent of the Arab League's GDP, the GCC has been pushed in recent years by the Saudis into forming an even tighter union to act as a counterweight to Iran.[35] This forms part of the Iran-Saudi Arabia proxy war which has been ongoing since the 1979 revolution, in which the two most powerful states in the region wrestle for control over the Islamic world. Saudi Arabia has positioned itself as the leading Sunni Muslim power, while Iran sees itself as the leading Shia power in the world.

Iraq and Jordan have historically enjoyed good relations, with both states even going as far as attempting unification in 1958 under the two Hashemite Kings at the time.[36] Jordan backed Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War from 1980 to 1988, becoming Iraq's main supply point during the war during the closure of the straits of Hormuz, an event that greatly restricted Iran's access to foreign trade and thus made Jordan a crucial Iranian ally.

On the other side politically, Syria and Iran remain strategic allies, with Syria considered Iran's "closest ally" throughout this period.[37] Both states shared a disdain for Saddam Hussein's Iraq, both suffered the ire of American influence, and Syria was a staunch ally of Iran during the Iran-Iraq war, despite sharing a large land border and a common ethnic background with Iraq. This is despite Syria and Iraq nominally sharing the same political ideology, known as *Ba'athism.* Ba'athism is a movement designed to promote pan-Arabism, calling for a unified Arab state through a socialist revolution. However, Syria's branch of Ba'athism developed distinctly from Iraqi Ba'athism (developing a great focus on military dominance),

30   "Timeline: Arab League," *BBC News*, last modified November 15, 2011, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/country_profiles/1550977.stm
31   "What is the GCC?," *Al Jazeera*, December 4, 2017, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/12/4/what-is-the-gcc.
32   "The Charter," Secretariat General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, accessed October 15, 2024, https://www.gcc-sg.org/en-us/AboutGCC/Pages/Primarylaw.aspx.
33   D. Cameron Watt, "Operation Vantage: British military intervention in Kuwait 1961," *International Affairs* 67, no. 1 (1991): 188-189, https://doi.org/10.2307/2621296.
34   Secretariat General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, "The Charter."
35   Andrew Hammond, "Analysis: Saudi Gulf union plan stumbles as wary leaders seek detail," *Reuters*, last accessed July 21, 2024, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-gulf-union-idUSBRE84G0WN20120517.
36   Simon, "The Hashemite 'Conspiracy': Hashemite Unity Attempts, 1921-1958," 314-327.
37   Nada Bakri, "Iran Calls on Syria to Recognize Citizens' Demands," *The New York Times*, August 8, 2011.

leading the two states to fissure, and great tensions now exist between them.

Saudi Arabia and Iraq were close through the 1980s, with the Saudi state providing Iraq with military and financial aid during the Iran-Iraq war despite officially proclaiming neutrality. However, they were put at odds with each other following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, with the Saudis claiming that this invasion posed a serious threat to regional stability and security. The Saudi government personally hosted the Kuwaiti government in exile.[38] The Saudis are likely to be the key state in the region to argue for international involvement in the Iraq-Kuwait invasion.

Most important are the relations between Iraq and Kuwait. Since the 1930s, Iraq has called for the two states to be unified, claiming that they were this way in the past, which has been historically demanded by the populations of both states.[39] As well as the 1961 Operation Vantage crisis (see below), a border skirmish in 1973 also saw Iraq occupy parts of Kuwait temporarily, causing international outcry.[40] Tensions continued to rise until the final and total invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in August 1990, discussed in the current status section.

Operation Vantage was a British military intervention aimed at protecting Kuwait from an Iraqi threat of annexation in October 1961. Following Kuwait's bilateral declaration of independence from British protection in June 1961, Iraq, under Prime Minister Abd al-Karim Qasim, laid claim to Kuwaiti territory, arguing that Kuwait had historically been part of Iraq.[41] As Qasim made calls demanding Kuwait's annexation, tensions prompted Kuwait to seek British military assistance to deter a potential Iraqi invasion, resulting in the deployment of British forces to the region. Following an overwhelming British air and naval presence, the Iraqi government was forced to temporarily halt these claims.

This intervention demonstrated the volatile potential of irredentist (i.e., laying claim to territory once belonging to your state) claims among Arab states. Iraq's assertion over Kuwait was rooted in a broader historical narrative that sought to reconfigure national borders based on perceived historical entitlements or upsets. Such claims were not isolated incidents but reflected a pattern of disputes that could escalate quickly, undermining regional stability. More recent examples of such claims included the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, and further back the 1934 Saudi-Yemeni border crisis, and all these examples contain elements of nationalism and populism. Leaders would attempt to raise tensions and cause disputes to rally the people around them, or to gain land from a neighboring state through conflict that would be otherwise unjustifiable to their population and the international community without using historical claims. The swift response by Britain to Kuwait's call for help highlighted the international community's concern over these disputes and the potential for broader conflict.

The events of Operation Vantage illustrated that the seeds of conflict based on territorial claims were deeply embedded in the region, foreshadowing future crises. Long before the Gulf War, the 1961 crisis revealed how easily irredentist ambitions can ignite tensions. These disputes, driven by historical grievances and nationalistic fervor, had the potential to disrupt peace and security. The operation reinforced the importance of addressing these underlying issues to prevent the outbreak of wars and maintain regional stability, both by the League and by the international community as a whole.

Sectarian Violence among Muslims and the Sunni-Shia Split

Understanding the development of Islam religion since its foundation in 610 is principal to fully digest the historical context in the Middle East before the outbreak of the Gulf War in 1990. Indeed, the religion itself is not a primary basis which caused the escalation in the Persian Gulf.[42] Nevertheless, it is

38   Samuel Helfont, "The Gulf War's Afterlife: Dilemmas, Missed Opportunities, and the Post-Cold War Order Undone," Texas National Security Review, last modified February 2, 2021, https://tnsr.org/2021/02/the-gulf-wars-afterlife-dilemmas-missed-opportunities-and-the-post-cold-war-order-undone/.
39   David Klein, *Mechanisms of Western Domination: A Short History of Iraq and Kuwait* (Northridge, California State University, 2003), https://blog.valdosta.edu/mgnoll/wp-content/uploads/sites/136/2022/03/Mechanisms-of-Western-Domination-in-Kuwait-and-Iraq.pdf.
40   "Message Text," U.S. Department of State, April 2, 1973, https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=178&dt=2472&dl=1345.
41   "British Troops Move into Kuwait," *The Guardian*, last modified June 20, 1961, https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/1961/jun/20/fromthearchive.
42   European Council on Foreign Relations, *Gulf Analysis: The Gulf and Sectarianism* (London: European Council on Foreign Relations, 2013), https://ecfr.eu/wp-content/uploads/ECFR91_GULF_ANALYSIS_AW.pdf.

also true to note that Islam has remained a controlled variable to trace the ongoing developments in the Middle East since the beginning of the 20th century.[43]

Islam was founded around 610 when the prophet Mohammed received a revelation. Following the persecution in Mecca, the faith expanded across and beyond the Arabian Peninsula, reaching toward the Iberian Peninsula.[44] This led to Mohammed becoming one of the influential figures in the Arab world under one faith, which lasted until 632 upon his death. Mohammed's death led to a new phase in the development of the Islamic religion. The religious debate over who should succeed Mohammed later explains the foundation of the Sunni and Shia branches of Islam.[45] Sunni branch argued that Abu Bakr, who was Mohammed's close ally, should succeed Mohammed's reins. The term Sunni derives from the *sunnah*, meaning the way of the prophet Mohammed. Shia branch, on the other hand, argued that Ali ibn Abi Talib, Mohammed's cousin and son-in-law, should be Mohammed's successor. The term Shia derives from *shi'atu Ali*, meaning the partisans of Ali.[46] Sunnis believed in the principle that caliphs should be chosen based on competence, while the Shias believed that Mohammed's bloodline was and is sacred.[47]

Ali became Caliph eventually, in a triumph for the Shia, but was assassinated shortly after. A brutal massacre of Ali's son and his followers followed in 680. The Shias had a new shared story to rally around, which led to further persecution by the ruling Sunni caliphs. The Sunnis eventually triumphed in the Arab world, and the Shia became a minority in the region, except for in Iran. The Umayyad Caliphate, a famous Muslim empire of the 7-8th century AD, was well known for its relentless persecution of its Shia minority.[48] Sunni remained the dominant force in the entire Muslim world until the Safavid dynasty came to power in Iran (then Persia) in the early 16th century, standing as a counterweight to the vast Ottoman empire which was predominantly Sunni. The borders that these empires expanded to correspond roughly to the modern political Sunni-Shia divide, with Shias in majority in Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, and Bahrain, while the Sunnis retained control in nearly every other Muslim state.

The ideological split dominates the discourse behind the status quo of the Middle East. In the modern world, these divisions became most significant following the 1979 Iranian revolution.[49] Shia cleric Ayatollah Khomeini claimed the mantle of Leader of the Islamic world, ruling Iran as an absolutist theocracy, meaning a totalitarian government ruled completely by Islamic rule), and using Iran's great natural wealth and large military to empower Shia minorities across the Arab world. Saudi Arabia, which claims to be the advocate of the status quo in the Middle East, is home to roughly seven million Muslims known as *Wahhabis*. Wahhabi Muslims are famous for their fanatical devotion to Islamism, their rejection of secularism and religious tolerance, and their links to terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and Boko Haram.[50] A core tenet of Wahhabism is also opposition to Shia Islam, which led Saudi Arabia to lead the charge against Iranian propagation of Shia Islam, giving rise to the ongoing Iran-Saudi Arabia proxy war.

The feud between Shia and Sunni Muslims is a long-standing and deeply rooted issue in the Middle East. Nearly every state in the Arab world is ruled by a political class consisting solely of one of the two Muslim sects, and the fears that the Sunni world has harbored for centuries- that the Shia Muslims are agitators and itching to revolt against their Sunni overlords- has only been compounded by the 1979 revolution in Iran, and tensions are as high now as they ever have been between Sunnis and Shias.[51]

The sectarian conflict and the feud between Sunni and Shia further escalated in Lebanon. The Lebanese Civil War ignited in 1975 between the Sunni, the Shia, and Maronite

43   European Council on Foreign Relations, *Gulf Analysis: The Gulf and Sectarianism.*
44   "Islam," History, last modified March 26, 2024, https://www.history.com/topics/religion/islam.
45   History, "Islam."
46   "The Sunni-Shia Divide," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified April 27, 2023, https://www.cfr.org/article/sunni-shia-divide.
47   Council on Foreign Relations, "The Sunni-Shia Divide."
48   Council on Foreign Relations, "The Sunni-Shia Divide."
49   Suzanne Maloney and Keian Razipour, "The Iranian revolution–A timeline of events," Brookings, January 24, 2019, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-iranian-revolution-a-timeline-of-events/.
50   "Saudi Arabia: Religious Demography," The APPG for International Freedom of Religion or Belief, accessed July 21, 2024, https://appgfreedomofreligionorbelief.org/saudi-arabia/.
51   Council on Foreign Relations, "The Sunni-Shia Divide."

Christians.[52] This is due to the diverse demographics in Lebanon where the wide range of religious subgroups make up the whole population. Sunni, Shina, and Maronite Christians were among the largest sects that compose the Lebanese population. These three subgroups shared the political power, but the tensions remained constant in Lebanese politics before the first phase of the Lebanese civil war.[53]

However, over time demographic shifts and political ambitions began to strain this balance. The Sunni and Shia Muslim communities began to show uneven economic prosperity, with Sunni Muslims in the wealthy coastal cities and Shia Muslims throughout southern Lebanon. Though the government was run largely by Maronite Christians at the time, the Shia formed a majority in the communist parties of Lebanon, in part due to their socioeconomic status, which put the Shia at odds with the wealthier Sunni Muslims.[54] Shia Muslims criticized the Lebanese government and the traditional Shia leadership for the neglect of Shia communities in response to the rise of Sunni Muslims and the Maronite Christians.

The violence in Beirut since April 1975 later worsened the situation in Lebanon. The tensions and minor skirmishes between different sects later escalated into full-scale conflict in the same year. Shia Muslims' military and political influence later grew gradually not only in the scenes but behind the scenes as well. Hezbollah emerged as a major participant in the situation in Lebanon.[55] The militant group took advantage of the turbulent situation in Lebanon as an opportunity to expand its influence across the country. This generated the environment for foreign powers to intervene, further complicating the damage that was already made.[56]

Foreign intervention in the Lebanese Civil War was also significantly influenced by the Sunni-Shia divide. In 1976, Syria intervened in the conflict with the main objective of restoring order in the region and further expanding its influence over the country.[57] Syrian intervention was conducted to prevent the Maronite Christians' defeat in the conflict.[58] Syrian forces maintained their military presence for the next three decades until the adoption of the Taif agreement which marked an end to the civil war.[59] Iran intervened in the Lebanese civil war following the Islamic Revolution in 1979. As a leading Shia power, Tehran sensed an opportunity to expand its influence and export the revolution across the Middle East to counter the Sunni influence.[60] Tehran and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) externally funded and trained the militants.[61] A few years later in 1982, Israel became a participant in the Lebanese civil war in response to the attacks launched by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).[62] PLO was based in southern Lebanon, which Israeli forces later occupied alongside West Beirut. Israeli intervention in the conflict continued until its withdrawal from Lebanon in 1985, except for the Lebanon-Israel border which acted as a temporary "security zone."[63]

The involvement of these external powers further complicated the war, prolonging the conflict and adding layers of geopolitical

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52   Sam Ellis and Rajaa Elidrissi, "How the Beirut explosion was a government failure," *Vox*, September 18, 2020, https://youtu.be/wFpfYT YupKA?si=oCwZzR5rAMJsJ0em.

53   Ellis and Elidrissi, "How the Beirut explosion was a government failure"; Issam Kayssi, "Lebanon's War Before the War," Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center, October 6, 2023, https://carnegieendowment.org/middle-east/diwan/2023/10/lebanons-war-before-the-war?lang=en.

54   Rodger Shanahan, *The Shi'a of Lebanon – The Shi'a of Lebanon Clans, Parties and Clerics* (London, New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2005), http://ndl.ethernet.edu.et/bitstream/123456789/51340/1/31.RODGER%20SHANAHAN.pdf.

55   Kali Robinson, "What is Hezbollah?," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified October 4, 2024, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hezbollah.

56   Robinson, "What is Hezbollah?."

57   Mona Yacoubian, *Syria's Role in Lebanon* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2006), https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/syria_lebanon.pdf.

58   "6.3.1. The Syrian intervention in the Lebanese civil war and presence in Lebanon (1976-2005)," European Union Agency for Asylum, last modified September 2020, https://euaa.europa.eu/country-guidance-syria/631-syrian-intervention-lebanese-civil-war-and-presence-lebanon-1976-2005.

59   Joseph Bahout, "The Unraveling of Lebanon's Taif Agreement: Limits of Sect-Based Power Sharing," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 16, 2016, https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2016/05/the-unraveling-of-lebanons-taif-agreement-limits-of-sect-based-power-sharing?lang=en.

60   Central Intelligence Agency, *Iran: Exporting the Revolution* (Langley: Central Intelligence Agency, 1980), https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP81B00401R000500100001-8.pdf.

61   Robinson, "What is Hezbollah?."

62   "The history of conflict between Hezbollah and Israel," *Al Jazeera*, last modified September 18, 2024, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/9/18/hezbollah-and-israel-a-timeline-of-conflict.

63   *Al Jazeera*, "The history of conflict between Hezbollah and Israel."

rivalry to the already intricate domestic struggle. Besides the Sunni-Shia divide in the region, the division among different sects acted as a catalyst of internal violence at the national level. At the international level, the tense environment among the Lebanese population created a channel for regional powers in the Middle East. On this account, Lebanon gradually became a focus point of the major conflicts in the region. The foreign powers' intervention in the internationalized intrastate conflict such as the Lebanese civil war strongly reflects how the volatile situation in one country could generate severe geopolitical ramifications rapidly. This case depicts how the Sunni-Shia divide in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) could modify the regional dynamics. The creation of different proxies that align with either the Sunni branch or the Shia branch continues to influence the modern-day geopolitics of the Middle East.[64] The fifteen-year-long war's legacy underscores the profound impact of sectarianism on national cohesion and regional stability, offering important lessons for understanding similar conflicts.

The International Petroleum Market and OPEC

Through its privileged position as the center of world oil production, the Middle East has enjoyed control over oil since the early 20th century upon its first discovery. Oil reserves account for the majority of the national revenue for countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, and Kuwait.[65] At the same time, these oil reserves attracted foreign powers to the Middle East. They hope to gain access to critical resources and secure, if not expand, their national interests. To illustrate, Saudi Arabia's security cooperation with the United States was built on the partnership formed with Standard Oil and the Texas Oil Company (Texaco) in 1932.[66] Since then, the oil reserves

have become one of the most disruptive issues in the modern-day global politics.[67]

One of the primary vessels for handling these resources is known as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Established in 1960, OPEC is primarily responsible for the "coordination and unification of the petroleum policies" of the member states to ensure stability in oil prices.[68] The organization is also responsible for countering the oil production monopoly dominated by the "Seven Sisters" multinational companies.[69] The organization's mandate was also designated to create a sense of control over one of the most important natural resources discovered in the region and present a united front against the Western oil companies' petroleum import controls.[70]

OPEC limited total oil output to minimize sudden price changes which negatively impact the oil companies and the stability of the global petroleum supply. OPEC oversees the control of worldwide oil prices and this may serve as a wild card for the organization. This is because the member states of the organization could manipulate the oil output limits, which could result in significant ramifications for the global oil market. Through OPEC's influence in the global oil market, the organization has carefully positioned itself as a contender in the oil sector at the international level.

One example is the Oil Embargo in 1973.[71] Amid the Arab-Israeli War which occurred in the same year, Arab members of the OPEC issued an embargo against those who extended their support to Israel. This was imposed as a result of the United States' decision to supply the Israeli forces, hoping to obtain leverage in the post-war peace negotiations.[72] It was also applied mostly to the Western countries, including the

64   Sam Ellis, "The Middle East's cold war, explained," *Vox*, July 17, 2017, https://youtu.be/veMFCFyOwFI?feature=shared.
65   "What is OPEC+ and how does it affect oil prices?," *Reuters*, last modified May 24, 2024, https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/what-is-opec-how-does-it-affect-oil-prices-2024-05-24/.
66   "U.S.-Saudi Arabia Relations," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified December 7, 2018, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-saudi-arabia-relations.
67   Edith Penrose, "Oil and International Relations," *British Journal of International Relations* 2, no. 1 (April 1976): 44-50, https://www.jstor.org/stable/20096756; "U.S. Relations With Saudi Arabia," U.S. Department of State, last modified November 1, 2023, https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-saudi-arabia/.
68   OPEC, *Statute* (Vienna: Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, 2021), https://www.opec.org/opec_web/static_files_project/media/downloads/publications/OPEC%20Statute.pdf.
69   "Brief History," OPEC, accessed October 14, 2024, https://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/about_us/24.htm.
70   Anshu Siripurapu and Andrew Chatzky, "OPEC in a Changing World," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified March 9, 2022, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/opec-changing-world.
71   "Oil Embargo, 1973-1974," Officer of the Historian, accessed July 22, 2024, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/oil-embargo.
72   Office of the Historian, "Oil Embargo, 1973-1974."

Gas ration stamps being printed as a result of the 1973 oil crisis

Credit: Warren K. Leffler, U.S. News & World Report Magazine

United Kingdom, Canada, the Netherlands, and Portugal.[73]

The embargo applied to banning oil exports and introducing cuts in oil production against the targeted countries.[74] This measure not only reflected the Arab OPEC members' discomfort with the targeted countries' stance in the Arab-Israeli War. It also reflected the substantial influence of the oil-producing countries in the Middle East by using oil reserves as leverage for diplomatic negotiations with their counterparts. This further suggests a financial pivot to oil-producing countries that are aware of the other countries' dependence on oil reserves.[75]

The oil embargo against the United States and its allies resulted in a swift shock to the global oil market, which led to a series of reactions from countries and OPEC. As for the global oil supply, the embargo contributed to an increase in oil prices at an exponential rate.[76] The price escalated from approximately USD 2 to USD 11.[77] This led firms and governments to begin the construction of alternative pipelines to divert from the potential crisis in the future. The construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System in 1974 disproves that the global oil market is one of the fragile sectors that are vulnerable to external factors.[78]

In light of the economic instability and possible long-term global recession, countries had to come up with their respective economic policies with the hope of minimizing the negative impact of the embargo. On November 7, 1973, US President Richard Nixon announced the Project Independence to promote the US's domestic energy independence.[79] Washington noted its high level of dependence on oil imports and budget deficits. Nixon administration took part in a series of diplomatic negotiations with the counterparts, which the negotiation was based on the economic impact of the oil pricing and its connection to the ongoing Arab-Israeli war. These negotiations with the Arab OPEC members culminated in a series of peace talks later leading to the First Egyptian-Israeli Disengagement Agreement on January 18, 1974.[80] In

73 Office of the Historian, "Oil Embargo, 1973-1974."
74 Office of the Historian, "Oil Embargo, 1973-1974."
75 Office of the Historian, "Oil Embargo, 1973-1974."
76 Office of the Historian, "Oil Embargo, 1973-1974."
77 Gregory L. Schneider, "The 1973 Oil Crisis and Its Economic Consequences," accessed October 14, 2024, https://billofrightsinstitute.org/essays/the-1973-oil-crisis-and-its-economic-consequences; Micheal Corbett, "Oil Shock of 1973-74," Federal Reserve History, accessed October 14, 2024, https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/oil-shock-of-1973-74.
78 "Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS)," ConocoPhillips, accessed October 14, 2024, https://alaska.conocophillips.com/who-we-are/alaska-operations/trans-alaska-pipeline-system-taps/.
79 Office of the Historian, "Oil Embargo, 1973-1974."
80 Office of the Historian, "Oil Embargo, 1973-1974."

parallel to the peace talks on the Arab-Israeli War, Washington took part in the diplomatic dialogues to lift the oil embargo and increase production. The embargo was lifted later in 1974 about the de-escalation of tensions between Israeli and Syrian forces in the Golan Heights.[81]

Interestingly enough, the crisis and its aftermath affected Iraq and Kuwait differently. The increase in oil prices would mean an increase in the benefits the oil-producing countries earn from the volatile nature of the global oil market. The shock in the oil market in response to the retaliatory measures set the precedent for the creation of the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the strategic stocks.[82]

The Iran-Iraq War, 1980-1988

The Iran-Iraq War, overshadowed in popular Western history by the 1991 Gulf War that followed, was a brutal eight-year war between Iran and Iraq. Reminiscent of the First World War in terms of tactics employed, economic destruction, and physical devastation, the war helped to "sow the seeds for current geopolitical rivalries", and served to further drive

a wedge between the Middle East and Iran & her allies.[83] [84] Understanding the severe economic, military and social damage done to Iraq in this war is crucial to gaining sufficient context to understand the events of the Gulf War.

The relationship between Iran and Iraq has for centuries involved disputes over territory, ethnic boundaries, and, most significantly in the 20th century, religious differences. Having both existed in some form for over a millennia, they have at times existed under one state (as under the Abbasid Caliphate, or Alexander the Great), or as warring states such as the Ottoman Empire controlling Iraq, fighting against a succession of Persian Imperial dynasties. Under the Turkey-led Saadabad pact of 1937, relations between the two states remained positive for decades.[85]

Though both parties signed up to the Baghdad pact of 1955, designed to form a Middle Eastern defense treaty similar to NATO, a 1958 coup in Iraq brought an end to this pact.[86] The new nationalist government in power in Iraq, led by Abd al-Karim Qasim, promptly took an irredentist tone towards Iran, claiming rightful ownership over the oil-rich

81   Office of the Historian, "Oil Embargo, 1973-1974."
82   Frank A. Verrastro and Guy Caruso, "The Arab Oil Embargo—40 Years Later," CSIS, last modified October 16, 2013, https://www.csis.org/analysis/arab-oil-embargo-40-years-later.
83   Ranj Alaaldin, "How the Iran-Iraq war will shape the region for decades to come," Brookings, October 9, 2020, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-the-iran-iraq-war-will-shape-the-region-for-decades-to-come/.
84   Alaaldin, "How the Iran-Iraq war will shape the region for decades to come."
85   Efraim Karsh, *The Iran–Iraq War: 1980–1988* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2002), 4.
86   Karsh, "The Iran–Iraq War: 1980–1988," 4.

Gamal Abdel Nasser in Saudi Arabia

Credit: Unknown author

Khuzestan province with its large Arab-speaking minority. They even began covert funding for Khuzestan independence movements.[87] Tensions grew further when a 1968 coup brought the powerful Ba'athist party to power in Iraq, with Iraq taking on the role of "leader of the Arab world," a claim strengthened by the death of Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1970. This coup eventually led to the rise of the infamous Saddam Hussein. On the other side, Iran had pursued a great military buildup under their Emperor, Shah Mohammad Pahlavi, leading both states to simultaneously pursue an aggressive and domineering stance in the Near East.[88] Tensions were only set to rise from this point.

In April 1969, Iran reversed a 1937 treaty on river tolls. This treaty dictated the fees Iranian cargo ships had to pay to Iraq when navigating the Shatt al-Arab, a river that demarcates part of the southern border between the two states. When Iraq threatened war over this decision, Iran used its superior military power as a show of force and forced Iraq to back down.[89]

Tensions rose further when in 1971 Iraq claimed control over a small series of Islands off the coast of Iran that had recently been vacated by the British. In a tit-for-tat escalation, Iran began supplying Kurdish rebels in Iraq with weapons, leading Iraq to support Iran's Kurdish rebels in kind. This escalated as far as small-scale border wars across the Kurdish regions in Balochistan, until the 1975 Algiers Agreement which intended to settle territorial disputes between the two countries and helped to warm relations. Despite the improvement of relations, Hussein only saw the Algiers Agreement as a truce and intended to continue the struggle when possible.[90]

Things changed following the seismic Iranian Revolution of 1979, which saw the Shah deposed and replaced with an Islamic theocracy. The new authoritarian regime that replaced the Emperor espoused a branch of Islam known as Shia, and Iran began to position itself as the head of the Islamic world and against the influence of the other large sect of Islam, Sunni. As a nominally secular state, Hussein believed that Iran would pose a serious threat to Iraq, especially if they chose to support Iraq's powerful Shia minority. With Iran's military left weakened following the revolution, due to purges in the upper ranks, Hussein chose to strike in September the following year.

On September 22, 1980, Iraq launched a surprise attack against the Iranian forces across their border, with a vast array of air strikes intending to destroy the Iranian air force. The following day, six divisions of Iraqi troops poured over the border and took the Iranian troops stationed there by surprise. Despite good initial progress, however, the airstrikes failed to knock out the Iranian air force, and the Iraqi troops were "badly led (…) [and] lacking in offensive spirit", failing to strike the decisive blow needed to win the war quickly.[91] The Iranians struck back quickly, targeting oil facilities, airfields, and dams in Eastern Iraq, causing heavy and unexpected damage to the Iraqi economy. As the Iraqi invasion efforts stalled, the conflict became eerily reminiscent of the First World War, with trench warfare, chemical weapons usage, and human wave offensives becoming commonplace. The latter of these, human wave offensives, were used extensively by the Iranians, who lacked heavy weapons such as artillery pieces but had large reserves of fanatical paramilitary volunteers.[92] These attacks were effective against the poorly disciplined Iraqi troops but cost many lives for the Iranians.

Chemical warfare in particular was widespread in the Iran-Iraq war, causing tens of thousands of casualties to both Iranian citizens and soldiers.[93] In one incident, it was reported that 20,000 Iranian soldiers were killed immediately by a single dispersal of nerve gas. Nearly twenty years on, 1,000 of the survivors of this attack were still classed as hospital in-patients.[94]

The war dragged on for eight years, with neither side gaining a conclusive advantage over the other. By late 1987, the Iranians

87   Karsh, "The Iran–Iraq War: 1980–1988," 4.
88   Karsh, "The Iran–Iraq War: 1980–1988," 4.
89   Karsh, "The Iran–Iraq War: 1980–1988," 4.
90   Karsh, "The Iran–Iraq War: 1980–1988," 4.
91   Patrick Brogan, *World Conflicts: A Comprehensive Guide to World Strife Since 1945* (London: Bloomsbury, 1989).
92   Kenneth M. Pollack, *Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948–1991* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).
93   "Iran Chemical Overview," Nuclear Threat Initiative, last modified Jan 23, 2020, https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/iran-chemical/.
94   Farnaz Fassihi, "In Iran, grim reminders of Saddam's arsenal," New Jersey Star-Ledger, last modified October 27, 2002, http://www.nj.com/specialprojects/index.ssf?/specialprojects/mideaststories/me1209.html.

had finally secured the upper hand, but dogged Iraqi resistance made Iran very war-weary and brought the economy to its knees. A ceasefire proposal put forward by the Iraqis in mid-1988 was eventually accepted by the Iranian Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

The ceasefire process was long and difficult, with mutual mistrust between the two sides. Though no conclusive peace treaty was ever signed, the UN-led actions pushed by UNSC Resolution 598 were a key element of the gradual peace process and helped to unify the international community behind efforts to stop the war.[95] There were multiple efforts by the UN throughout the war to push for peace, and they were all refused, mostly by the Iranians.

The Iran-Iraq war was the deadliest conventional war fought between two developing states in history.[96] Casualty estimates range between one million and two million dead and wounded, with up to one million dead.[97] Losses exceeded USD 1.2 trillion combined, and Iraq in particular accumulated over USD 130 billion in international debt. This figure helped to increase Iraq's dependency on regular and profitable oil exports, eventually heightening tensions between Iraq and Kuwait.

From a military standpoint, the Iran-Iraq war significantly impacted Iraq's ability to fight modern wars, as the Iranian military's tactics of trench warfare and human wave offensives meant that the Iraqi military developed to counter these threats and these threats alone. This meant that the Iraqi military from 1990 was poorly equipped to deal with modern conflict.

The Tanker War marked an important phase in the Iran-Iraq War. In May 1981, Iraq declared that all ships heading to or departing from Iranian ports in the northern part of the Gulf would experience the attack.[98] Baghdad responded with its air force and anti-cruise missiles. The situation escalated in 1984 when Iraqi forces committed an attack on Iranian oil tankers. Tehran responded with an attack on ships from other Gulf states.[99] Throughout the conflict, Baghdad and Tehran aimed at each other's capability to support their war efforts and employ international pressure by threatening the global oil supply. Both Iraq and Iran were heavily dependent on oil exports for national revenue. Oil revenues for Iran peaked at USD 20.3 billion in 1983. This accounts for 13 percent of its entire GDP, up to 18 percent for Iraq.[100] Targeting their enemy's oil vessels would signal the disruption of their oil exports. The impact of the Iran-Iraq war went beyond the borders of Iraq and Iran. Saudi Arabia extended its support to Iraq, sensing the threat Iran's attacks pose to Iraq and possibly to Riyadh.[101] Iraq is geographically located between Iran and Saudi Arabia. For Riyadh, this meant that Saudi Arabia virtually had a buffer which could prevent Iranian threats from spreading across the country and the region.[102]

The developments in the Tanker Wars since 1981 attracted international attention. This sparked the debate over the security of oil supplies from the Persian Gulf. The security of the Persian Gulf is crucial, as this region accounts for 20 to 30 percent of worldwide oil trades.[103] Approximately 17 million oil barrels are carried through the Strait of Hormuz which is located in the Persian Gulf.[104] In response, countries increased their naval presence to safeguard shipping lanes around the Persian Gulf. Notably, *Operation Earnest Will* saw U.S. Navy vessels escort reflagged Kuwaiti & Iraqi oil tankers, demonstrating the strategic importance of maintaining open and secure maritime routes for oil transport. A key outcome

95   "Security Council Resolution 598: Iraq-Islamic Republic of Iran," United Nations Peacemaker, last modified 2019, https://peacemaker.un.org/iraqiran-resolution598.
96   Henner Fürtig, "Den Spieß umgedreht: iranische Gegenoffensive im Ersten Golfkrieg [Turning of the Tables: the Iranian counter-offensive during the first Gulf War]," *Damals* 44, no.5 (2012): 10-13.
97   Dilip Hiro, *The Longest War: The Iran–Iraq Military Conflict* (New York: Routledge, 1991).
98   "Assessing the threat to oil flows through the Strait," Strauss Center, accessed October 15, 2024, https://www.strausscenter.org/strait-of-hormuz-tanker-war/.
99   "The Iran-Iraq war," Netherlands Ministry of Defense, accessed October 15, 2024, https://english.defensie.nl/topics/historical-missions/mission-overview/1987/the-iran-iraq-war.
100   "Iran GDP 1960-2024," Macrotrends, accessed July 21, 2024, https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/countries/IRN/iran/gdp-gross-domestic-product?q=iraq+gdp; "Iraq Crude Oil: Exports," CEIC Data, accessed July 21, 2024, https://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/iraq/crude-oil-exports.
101   Central Intelligence Agency, *Iran: Exporting the Revolution*.
102   Central Intelligence Agency, *Iran: Exporting the Revolution*.
103   "About the Strait," Strauss Center, accessed October 15, 2024, https://www.strausscenter.org/strait-of-hormuz-about-the-strait/.
104   Strauss Center, "About the Strait."

of Earnest Will was that Iranian oil tankers, not afforded the protection extended to the Iraqis, became uninsurable due to a lack of protection, and Iranian oil revenues plummeted. The Tanker War underscores the critical role of oil in the economic strategies of Iran and Iraq. Disrupting oil exports was a means to cripple the enemy's war effort, illustrating the direct link between economic resources and military strategy.

The real significance of the Tanker War is that the international community became involved the moment global oil supply chains were threatened. In 1984, when Iran closed the Straits of Hormuz thus preventing Iraq from exporting oil by sea, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the US all began to support Iraq in the conflict. America's intervention in the form of Operation Earnest Will was the largest convoy protection operation since WW2 and showed the lengths the US would go to protect the oil trade in the Gulf, even if it meant endangering American lives.

Current Status

The Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait

After years of strained invasions and irredentist rhetoric, the Hussein government made the consequential decision to invade Kuwait on August 2, 1990. By wiping an entire country off the map, they provoked a major international crisis. Armed with the necessary context, the causational factors can be studied, the critical events explained, and the international response understood.

By the first half of 1990, Iraq's economy was performing poorly.[105] The country still struggled to account for the economic loss from the Iran-Iraq War which ended two years before the invasion. Despite the war ending with inconclusive outcomes, Iraq still owed a significant amount of debt at around USD 80 billion to the Gulf states before Iraq invaded Kuwait, with Baghdad already owing USD 14 billion to Kuwait.[106] Baghdad's financial obligations to the Gulf states, including Kuwait, led to the constraints in Iraq's diplomatic relationship with Kuwait.

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105   "The Gulf War," Netherlands Ministry of Defense, accessed October 15, 2024, https://english.defensie.nl/topics/historical-missions/mission-overview/1990/the-gulf-war.

106   Tom Cooper and Ahmad Sadik, "Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait; 1990," Air Combat Information Group Journal, last modified July 6, 2013, https://archive.today/20130706142817/http://www.acig.info/CMS/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=68&Itemid=47; Idris Okuyucu, "Surviving Daesh, Iraq is grabbed by debt spiral," *Anadolu Ajansı*, last modified August 5, 2018, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/economy/surviving-daesh-iraq-is-grabbed-by-debt-spiral/1222685.

Iraqi Type 69 main battle tank sits on the side on the road into Kuwait City

Credit: J.R. Roark, US Marines

Indeed, Kuwait's oil production had been consistently above the OPEC quote for years.[107] Yet oil production was one of the central clash points to understand the background of Baghdad's decision to invade Kuwait. Iraq accused Kuwait of exceeding its OPEC quota, which led to a surplus in the global oil market and a subsequent decline in oil prices. This situation only made matters worse for Iraq. Baghdad accused Kuwait of slant drilling into the Rumaila oil field which is located near the Iraq-Kuwait border. This is a method commonly used by a party to effectively steal oil. The Rumaila oil field provides 12 percent of Iraq's oil and is amongst the three largest oil fields in the world.[108] Since Kuwait's oil production rate was increasing, this led Hussein to accuse Kuwait of stealing oil from the Rumaila field. However, according to local oil workers, slant drilling was not taking place and this story had been fabricated by the Iraqis.[109]

Iraq's economic situation was worsened by declining oil prices in the late 1980s, which reduced its revenue from oil exports, and as previously mentioned Iraq's economy was heavily reliant on these oil revenues. Iraq had defaulted on its debt in the late 1980s and was in serious need of an economic boost.[110]

Irredentist claims also played a role, as many in the Iraq government considered Kuwait to be a core component of their country. This perspective was rooted in the period when both were part of the Ottoman Empire's Basra province. Hussein revived these claims, asserting that Kuwait's borders were artificially drawn by British colonial powers. He also harbored dreams of regional dominance, fueled by the rise of Iran and Saudi Arabia as regional powers, and saw the war and future control of Kuwait as a way of improving Iraq's strategic situation. Furthermore, following a diplomatic intervention from the UAE mere days before the invasion began, Kuwait agreed to a reduction in daily oil sales, a move which should have satisfied the Iraqis if all they were upset about was the oil sales.[111] The fact that they chose to push on with the invasion implies deeper motivation.

Additionally, when probed about the issue of Iraqi troop buildup around the Kuwait border in July 1990, April Glaspie, the US Ambassador to Iraq, stated plainly: "[The US,] inspired by the friendship and not by confrontation, does not have an opinion" on the disagreement between Kuwait and Iraq, stating "we have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts".[112] This, and other correspondence, gave Hussein the view that he had a green light from the US to invade Kuwait, though this was denied by the US subsequently.

At dawn on August 2, 1990, around 90,000 Iraqi troops poured over the border into Kuwait, along with modern helicopters, aircraft, and tanks.[113] Caught by surprise, the Kuwaiti military put up a strong fight but were heavily outnumbered. With the Emir's palace overrun before the end of the day on the 2nd, a coherent military resistance had already become impossible, and despite aid resupplies coming from Saudi Arabia, the last Kuwaiti base was occupied by Iraq on the evening of the 3rd. Though initially told to treat the civilians with respect, Iraqi officials soon began executing hundreds of Kuwaiti resistance fighters to stem opposition to their rule.[114] The entire invasion was over in less than 48 hours.

The Ongoing International Response

In a rare show of unity, the Iraqi invasion and annexation has been met with universal condemnation by all major world

107   "OPEC pressures Kuwait to moderate quota demand," *New Straits Times*, June 7, 1989.
108   Christopher Helman, 'The World's biggest oil Reserves," *Forbes USA*, January 21, 2010, http://www.forbes.com/2010/01/21/biggest-oil-fields-business-energy-oil-fields.html.
109   Thomas C. Hayes, "Confrontation in the Gulf; The Oilfield Lying Below the Iraq-Kuwait Dispute," *The New York Times*, September 3, 1990, https://www.nytimes.com/1990/09/03/world/confrontation-in-the-gulf-the-oilfield-lying-below-the-iraq-kuwait-dispute.html.
110   Simon Hinrichson, *Tracing Iraqi Sovereign Debt Through Defaults and Restructuring* (London: The London School of Economics and Political Science, December 2019), https://www.lse.ac.uk/Economic-History/Assets/Documents/WorkingPapers/Economic-History/2019/WP304.pdf
111   Youssef M Ibrahim, "Iraq Said to Prevail in Oil Dispute With Kuwait and Arab Emirates," *The New York Times,* July 26, 1990, https://www.nytimes.com/1990/07/26/world/iraq-said-to-prevail-in-oil-dispute-with-kuwait-and-arab-emirates.html?pagewanted=1.
112   Elaine Sciolino Gordon, "CONFRONTATION IN THE GULF; U.S. Gave Iraq Little Reason Not to Mount Kuwait Assault," *The New York Times*, September 23, 1990, https://www.nytimes.com/1990/09/23/world/confrontation-in-the-gulf-us-gave-iraq-little-reason-not-to-mount-kuwait-assault.html.
113   "The Iraqi Invasion; In Two Arab Capitals, Gunfire and Fear, Victory and Cheers," *The New York Times*, August 3, 1990, https://www.nytimes.com/1990/08/03/world/the-iraqi-invasion-in-two-arab-capitals-gunfire-and-fear-victory-and-cheers.html.
114   Patrick E. Tyler, "Kuwaitis Scale Back Resistance Effort," *The Washington Post*, October 5, 1990, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1990/10/05/kuwaitis-scale-back-resistance-effort/5f04b295-cb4b-455f-88ef-783191343cea/.

powers, even traditional allies of Iraq such as France. Calls for withdrawal have been unanimous, which culminated in UNSC resolution 660 on August 2, 1990. This resolution was passed 14-0, while Yemen was present and not voting. Under Resolution 660, the UN Security Council condemned the invasion and demanded an unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait.[115] The Security Council also called upon both Baghdad and Kuwait to start with "intensive negotiations" for the conflict resolution of the mutual differences and supports all efforts about this matter.[116]

The Security Council adopted the Resolution 661, which built on the action items and statements outlined in the Resolution 660.[117] The UN Security Council announced an intention to place sanctions on Iraq. Chapter 7 of the UN Charter highlights that "the Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken."[118] The resolution was passed 13-0, with abstentions from Cuba and Yemen. The UN sanctions placed on Iraq reflect the gravity of Iraqi military actions against Kuwait. Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait generated significant geopolitical ramifications, and the international community has responded with economic sanctions and condemnation aiming to mediate the situation.

UNSC resolution 661 signed into effect a United Nations-wide ban on trade with Iraq, effectively sealing its economy off from the entire world. The UN hoped to discourage recognition of the Iraqi annexation of Kuwait, which no countries have recognized thus far, and an August 10th Arab League resolution condemning Iraq received majority approval.[119] However, Jordan, Sudan, Tunisia, Yemen, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) remained somewhat sympathetic to Iraq, again demonstrating the League's hopelessness in promoting Arab unity, even when one of its member states is attempting to annex the other.[120]

Most importantly, from August 7, US troops have begun to be deployed to Saudi Arabia, though currently only in small numbers. The US has taken the lead in condemning Iraq. Even though not currently calling for military action, they seem determined to unseat the Iraqi forces from Kuwait. This military buildup remains small at the moment. But due to good relations between Riyadh and Washington D.C., it would be easy for a larger scale deployment to occur.[121]

The Soviet Union has thus far remained hesitant to outwardly support the US-led actions against Iraq- though are not actively fighting it- and they could choose to actively support the American actions, take a neutral stance, or instead turn against them entirely.

Negotiations have begun, and it is unknown whether the situation will be resolved diplomatically, through military force, or otherwise. In light of the developments, Kuwait's government-in-exile began its operation in Saudi Arabia. Iraq has been diplomatically isolated but remains a force to be reckoned with militarily. Baghdad still has the largest and most effective army in the region, with hundreds of thousands of men and state-of-the-art equipment. What will come of the invasion of Kuwait is still yet to be seen.

Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the list of 17 goals adopted by the United Nations (UN) which outline the targets for the international community to eliminate poverty, protect the environment, and uphold the values of peace and justice.[122] The series of 17 goals includes different targets and indicators the international community will meet by the

115   United Nations Security Council, Resolution 660, Iraq-Kuwait, S/RES/660(1990) (Aug. 2, 1990), https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/94220?ln=en&v=pdf.
116   S/RES/660(1990).
117   United Nations Security Council, Resolution 661, The Situation between Iraq and Kuwait, S/RES/661(1990) (Aug. 6, 1990), https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/94221?ln=en&v=pdf.
118   "CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS," United Nations, June 26, 1945, https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/uncharter.pdf.
119   S/RES/661(1990).
120   Office of the Historian, "The Gulf War, 1991," U.S. Department of State, accessed October 15, 2024, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/gulf-war.
121   Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, "U.S. Relations with Saudi Arabia," U.S. Department of State, November 1, 2023, https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-saudi-arabia/.
122   "Sustainable Development Goals," United Nations Development Programme, accessed October 15, 2024, https://www.undp.org/

year 2030.[123] The Sustainable Development Goals and the subsequent targets were adopted in 2015, 25 years after the initial stages of the Gulf War. Even so, the logic behind the targets and their indicators can be applied to the status of the War in the Gulf which ignited in the early 1990s.

Goal 16 –Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions– offers an insight into what the international community should prioritize to meet the commitments about sustainable development. Goal 16 has ten "outcome targets," which include reducing violence, protecting children, and reducing corruption.[124] Large-scale war, and the brutal occupation that often follows, contravenes many of these targets. Target 2 aims to "protect children from abuse, exploitation, trafficking and violence."[125] Multiple reports from Kuwait highlight that there have been traumatic forced evacuations, torture against civilians, and even sexual assaults against victims as young as 12.[126] This strongly reflects that the ramifications of the Gulf War go beyond the military conflict itself and reach toward the socioeconomic dimension of the war.

The second pillar to emphasize is the rule of law at national and international levels to enhance the conflict resolution mechanisms.[127] Modern warfare is brutal, chaotic, and difficult to predict. Political freedoms, the rule of law, and fundamental human rights can easily disappear into the fog of war. Target 16.3 indicates the institutional framework to improve the conflict resolution mechanisms regarding the proportion of the population who has direct experience with violence.[128] This could suggest that Chapter 7 of the UN Charter may apply in this case. Subsequent articles call attention to taking action against any threat to international peace and security.[129] Thus, it can be seen as a method of preventing further contraventions.

The Arab League has spent decades demonstrating to the international community that it is wholly incapable of policing its own member states' actions. Consequently, it can be argued that the UN has a moral obligation to step into the League's void and fill the gap. This would help to provide an "accountable and inclusive" institution that could enforce the SDGs and help to provide justice for all, as well as meet the other indicators responsible for ensuring peace and justice for the population.

To fully comprehend the status of the conflict, the international community should recognize the connection between the military and economic aspects. Goal 8 –Decent Work and Economic Growth– further elaborates on the economics behind the scenes in parallel with Goal 16 which addresses the military and humanitarian dimension.[130] Iraq and Kuwait's economy experienced a significant decline since the outbreak of the war. Target 8.1 further shows that in light of the conflict situation, parties involved experience limitations in sustaining annual economic growth. Iraq's economic weakness illustrates Saddam Hussein's motivation to invade Kuwait aiming to annex some of its oil reserves and alleviate its debts to Kuwait.[131]

The international community, as well as the UN Security Council, should therefore recognize the importance of tackling the economic policies that minimize the negative impact of the conflict. This should support the international community in constructing the base for countries' long-term economic growth alongside the peacebuilding initiatives.

Bloc Analysis

Points of Division

Despite being a small-scale regional conflict, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait bears international importance due to multiple factors. Firstly, as a large power in the Arab world, if Iraq were

sustainable-development-goals.
123   United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Development Goals."
124   "Goal 16," United Nations, accessed September 13, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16.
125   United Nations, "Goal 16."
126   James Lemoyne, "MIDEAST TENSIONS: New Kuwait Refugees Tell Of Iraqi Killings and Rapes," *The New York Times,* December 2, 1990, https://www.nytimes.com/1990/12/02/world/mideast-tensions-new-kuwait-refugees-tell-of-iraqi-killings-and-rapes.html.
127   United Nations, "Goal 16."
128   United Nations, "Goal 16."
129   United Nations, "CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS."
130   "Goal 8," United Nations, accessed October 15, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal8.
131   United Nations, "Goal 8."

to become stronger (i.e., by annexing a nearby wealthy state) it would upset the balance of power in the region, and allow Iraq free reign over its neighbors. This could lead to further conflict, and given Iraq's previous chemical weapons usage, these conflicts could be seriously lethal. Most important, however, is the strategic relevance of the natural resources in the region. Put more simply: the oil present in the Gulf makes the invasion a global affair. The Persian Gulf oil reserves have been described as "immense", and "...of global importance" by some observers.[132] This makes much of the world reliant on Kuwaiti oil, and this is especially true of the Western world, which relies on Middle Eastern oil and has a long history of presence in the region.

Points of division are decided almost exclusively by a nation's belief in how the conflict should be resolved. While many Western states may believe that force is needed- either diplomatically or militarily- many states may argue that the UN should stay out of the war, to prevent more bloodshed. These states may take a humanitarian stance, though tend to be neutral on the issue: not actively getting in the way of those that want to get involved, but perhaps pursuing humanitarian aid and diplomatic routes. Furthermore, some states may believe that the West is wrong to get involved at all, and may be fervently anti-interventionist. These states may be historically anti-Western, and seeing the West's intentions as bad, they could actively oppose any such attempts at intervention. Each of these blocs contains at least one P5 power, and they are of roughly equal size and importance. United largely by strategic interests, they represent the ideal opening dynamic for a committee and set the stage for real power blocs to form through the conference.

The Interventionists

This bloc represents the quintessential American-aligned Western world, buoyed in confidence by the reunification of Germany and the waning importance of the Warsaw Pact. The US, the leader of this group, famously supported Iraq in the Iran-Iraq war, providing billions of dollars in military aid and even refusing to report Iraqi chemical weapons usage to the UN.[133] Their goal was to prevent Iranian dominance in the region. However, strategic changes have brought new political alignments, and the US has been firmly and ardently opposed to the invasion of Kuwait from the beginning, due both to their innate democratic interventionist mandate and their desire to keep international oil trade going. Countries in this bloc include Belgium, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

This bloc is likely to be interventionist, with a proven history of military intervention in less developed states and a purportedly "anti-dictator" mandate to swing around as a Casus Belli when needed. These powers have a keen interest in stemming Iraqi power, both militarily and economically, and this requires keeping Kuwaiti oil out of Iraqi hands. They see Iraqi dominance of Kuwait as a threat to the region's stability; if Iraq controls the combined oil and trade of both countries, their economy will be significantly strengthened. Though diplomatic options will be considered, these NATO powers will not be afraid to use force when necessary.

The countries in this bloc will tend to follow the lead of the US, with the possible exception of France; as a veto power themselves, they may wish to take their stance especially given France's opposition to the US chain of command control over France and their historic relationship with Iraq. However, they are just as likely to join any sort of coalition due to commitments to upholding anti-authoritarianism and following UN mandates. These states will interact with each other well and are likely to stay together for the entire committee, by and large.

The Non-Aligned Movement

A large bloc composed of the state's likely to push for de-escalation, though not opposed to intervention under all circumstances. These states have embargoed and condemned Iraq for its militaristic choices in the past, especially during the Iran-Iraq war. This bloc feels that the Iraqi invasion was wrong, but believes perhaps that an UN-mandated war may

132   Shibley Telhami, "The Persian Gulf- understanding American Oil Strategy," Brookings, March 1, 2002, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-persian-gulf-understanding-the-american-oil-strategy/.
133   Shane Harris, "Exclusive: CIA Files Prove America Helped Saddam as He Gassed Iran," *Foreign Policy*, August 26, 2013, https://foreignpolicy.com/2013/08/26/exclusive-cia-files-prove-america-helped-saddam-as-he-gassed-iran/.

lead to excess casualties. They may thus be keen on ensuring humanitarian aid flows to the region. Countries in this bloc include Austria, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Romania, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

So far, the USSR has gently attempted to stem the coalition's attempts to invade but is too busy collapsing to exert any real influence. It may relent and allow a resolution to pass.. Since it retains a veto power, however, it may choose to use it to check US influence in the region.

These states are not generally opposed to the US-led group but may choose to attempt to de-escalate if they feel the US is being too hawkish, for example. They favor a diplomatic solution such as a negotiated peace settlement or an embargo and as members of the non-aligned movement. One exception is the USSR, which has been included here due to its changing political situation. Nevertheless, members of the bloc are especially keen to remain out of any conflict themselves.

There is potential for disharmony amongst these states, as the only thing that unites them is their lack of enthusiasm for war. They are of vastly different political positions. Some, like newly democratic Romania, may choose to side with the West to prove their new democratic mandate, as indeed Romania did in the coalition in 1991. While others, such as the USSR, may choose to side with whatever China ends up doing. This bloc may end up being a feeder into the other two blocs, instead of a group in its own right.

The Reactionaries

This bloc constitutes the states that are generally anti-Western, but also either interventionist in their own right or have come up against the West at some point in their recent history. Due to strategic alignments, they have a vested interest in checking Western influence in the Middle East, and though they historically had no opposition to the invasion, they may choose to oppose it this time around. Countries in this bloc include China, Cuba, India, Yemen, Zimbabwe, and Zaire.

China currently supports the de-escalation of the crisis but seems to show no interest in sending troops despite popular

support within China. Again, they may resort to using their veto.

Cuba, as a long-time Western Foe, is likely to condemn US-led military intervention in the long run.

India, a rising star in the 90s, could choose to be contrarian and rally a non-aligned force to oppose the West, for example. China, too, could go down this route.

Yemen was the only state to either abstain or not vote in both UNSC resolutions 660 and 661, showing an unwillingness to take a firm stance on the issue. In Arab League debates, they also displayed a sympathy for Iraq that may manifest in opposition to Western intervention.

Zimbabwe and Zaire are both embroiled in crises of their own; Mugabe's Zimbabwe recently had US aid cut due to concerns over "uncivil and undiplomatic statements", and has continued to invoke the ire of the USA, while Zaire is on the brink of collapse having lost US funding around 1990 pending the end of the cold war. Both of these states may have an ax to grind against the US for this reason.

These states may end up as contrarians and may favor the opposite of whatever the US does. Or, they may fall into line and vote through a resolution, in a show of unity, because they have little to gain from opposing intervention.

Committee Mission

As the only organ of the United Nations with the authority to impose binding resolutions on all 159 member states, the UNSC is the only UN body to look to for a crisis like this. It "(...) has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security," requiring it to make decisions in the interest of preserving peace and ensuring stability.[134] There is both a moral and legal responsibility for these states to ensure that they make choices that will meet these objectives. The problem lies in the interpretation of that responsibility; while one state may believe military intervention is the only way to ensure regional peace, some may argue that one cannot fight fire with fire. This is further complicated by the five

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134 "The UN Security Council," United Nations, accessed August 14, 2024, https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en.

permanent members –China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States–maintaining complete veto power over any resolution that they do not approve of.

Given these complexities, the aim of this committee is thus to act as a platform for debate and compromise. Since UNSC resolutions are binding, member states have to think harder about supporting resolutions than they may do in a General Assembly committee with no legal backing. Their choices will have real-world consequences for the entire world. Therefore, the agendas of each state matter deeply here. Due to the differing interests of member states, a compromise must be reached, and that is the mission of this committee. Faced with a regional crisis that threatens peace, security, and stability, it is up to the delegates of the UN Security Council to find a solution that can minimize the negative impacts of the crisis in the Middle East.

Research and Preparation Questions

Your dais has prepared the following research and preparation questions as a means of providing guidance for your research process. These questions should be carefully considered, as they embody some of the main critical thought and learning objectives surrounding your topic.

Topic A

1. Article 24 gives the UN Security Council tremendous power and responsibility. How should the UN Security Council respond to the situation in Yugoslavia?

2. In the timeline of the committee Serbia and the JNA are in the process of launching an offensive into Croatia, culminating in the Battle of Vukovar. Civilian as well as military casualties are high. How will the committee respond to this situation?

3. Alleged war crimes and accusations of genocide are a dime a dozen in this conflict. What is true and what is not? How will the UN find the truth and bring the perpetrators to justice?

4. Arms and weapons from around the world just seem to find their way into the hands of combatants on both sides. How will the UNSC deal with the flow of arms into the former Yugoslavia?

5. A War of Ideas is the conflict behind or in front of, every battle. What is freedom? What is justice? What is extremism? How do we build a unified and stable governance system?

6. Many Great Powers have an interest in the former Yugoslavia. How will the UNSC deal with the conflict within the committee?

7. There are many different potential solutions to the situation in Yugoslavia. Different countries will have different opinions. What ideas do your countries propose to mitigate the crisis?

8. There are many issues at stake in the situation, sometimes the UN will have to prioritize certain issues over others. What does your country think is the most urgent issue in the situation of Yugoslavia?

Topic B

1. How should the UNSC respond to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait? What must take place to prevent any further aggression?

2. Many Arab states are divided on supporting one of the two, Iraq or the coalition forces. How can the UNSC pursue the prevention of regional instability all while maintaining cohesion among the Middle East's member states?

3. If Iraq refuses to withdraw from Kuwait, what are some long-term strategies that the UNSC should consider to achieve sustainable peace in the region?

4. Sanctions have been proposed with hopes of leading Iraq into a withdrawal from Kuwait. What kind of sanctions would be most effective; how will the entire international community enforce them?

5. The flow of oil from the Gulf is a necessity for the global economy. How could the UNSC navigate these dire economic implications while still managing the security of oil supplies?

6. With increasing reports of human rights violations in Kuwait, what meticulous actions should the UNSC take to further

investigate and respond to these charges?

7. The United Nations' credibility is at stake due to its response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. How must the UNSC sustain its authority amid such a major regional conflict?

Important Documents

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