



NHSMUN

**UNSC-B**

**BACKGROUND GUIDE**

**Secretary-General**  
**Terry Wang**

**Director-General**  
**Jordan Baker**

**Delegate Experience**  
**Nastasja Vásquez**

**Global Partnerships**  
**Daniela Maciel**  
**Sebastian Jimenez**

**Under-Secretaries-General**

**Nachiketh Anand**  
**Alina Castillo**

**Seonghyun Chang**  
**Naina Dhawan**

**Ximena Faz**  
**Kellie Fernandez**

**Grace Harb**  
**Adiva Ara Khan**

**Anshul Magal**  
**Analucia Tello**

**Sofia Velasco**  
**Renata Venzor**

Dear Delegates,

My name is Mariana Ferreira, and I have the pleasure of welcoming you to Security Council-B for NHSMUN 2025! It is a privilege to be your director alongside David Phipps, the Session II director, to create the guide that will serve as the baseline document for your research and preparation for your upcoming NHSMUN committee experience.

A little bit about me: I was born in São Paulo, Brazil, and moved to Utah, United States when I was nine years old. I am a current sophomore at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland pursuing a double major in Political Science and International Studies with minors in Theatre Arts and Film and Media.

I love film, theater, and politics. Choosing my favorite film is as hard in comparison to picking a favorite child. My favorite play is without a doubt, Hamlet. I have a weird obsession with sticky notes, and my favorite utensils are tongs. And, if I could have dinner with any famous person, dead or alive, I'd have tea time with Queen Elizabeth II.

This is my fourth year in NHSMUN; my second on staff. I have been a delegate in the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues Committee (SOCHUM), and was an Assistant Director for the Peacebuilding Commission last year.

My favorite part of NHSMUN is all of you, the delegates. The personal growth I witness from every one of you throughout the few days together makes the countless hours of training and writing incredibly worth it. Which brings me to your main responsibility at this conference: growth. If you've never given a speech, give one. If you have never merged blocs, do it. The main points of NHSMUN are education and growth; one I will do my best to provide, and the other should be your goal from this point forward.

Model United Nations teaches you so many valuable lessons all at once, and it becomes clearer to me every year the honor and privilege there is behind the academic experience. NHSMUN means a lot of things to different people. I have experienced some of my best memories and have met some of my closest friends during the conference. I have met people from all over the world who have taught and continue to teach me more about the world every single day. I encourage you to make the best out of your time here: NHSMUN is what you make of it.

I look forward to meeting you all. We are more than eager to help—please reach out if you have any questions.

Mariana Ferreira

Director, UNSC-B Session I

[nhsmun.unsc-b@imuna.org](mailto:nhsmun.unsc-b@imuna.org)



**Secretary-General**  
**Terry Wang**

**Director-General**  
**Jordan Baker**

**Delegate Experience**  
**Nastasja Vásquez**

**Global Partnerships**  
**Daniela Maciel**  
**Sebastian Jimenez**

**Under-Secretaries-General**

**Nachiketh Anand**  
**Alina Castillo**

**Seonghyun Chang**  
**Naina Dhawan**  
**Ximena Faz**

**Kellie Fernandez**  
**Grace Harb**

**Adiva Ara Khan**  
**Anshul Magal**

**Analucia Tello**  
**Sofia Velasco**

**Renata Venzor**

Dear Delegates,

Hello, and welcome to NHSMUN 2025! My name is David Phipps, and I am so excited to serve as your Session II Director for the United Nations Security Council - B. My Session I co-director Mariana and I worked diligently to identify the two best topics for you delegates to discuss and debate: “The Conflict in Afghanistan” and “The Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh.” Both involve long histories of conflict and hardship, and we are confident in your ability to address the situations.

To introduce myself, I am from San Jose, California. I am currently a Junior at De Anza College in Cupertino, California with a major in mathematics. In my free time, I enjoy playing games with friends and listening to music. I also have swam competitively for much of the past 15 years. Model UN has been a part of my life since high school. I am fortunate to have attended many conferences since the Bay Area has plenty of them, including those at Stanford and Berkeley, to name a few. My experiences range from several classic General Assembly Committees and more out-of-the-box scenarios, such as a committee dedicated to discussing the Great Flu Epidemic in 2018 and a full Ad Hoc US Senate simulation.

I first attended NHSMUN as a delegate in 2018 in the UNESCAP committee, and again in 2019 in DISEC. This will be my second year as a director of NHSMUN, with my first being the director of UNSC-A last year. Throughout my time at NHSMUN, I’ve met and interacted with so many smart, well-spoken, and fun people. I hope that I can pass along the same amazing experience as my directors before me. Whether it’s your first NHSMUN or your last, I sincerely hope you have a great time, and learn something along the way.

The topics that Mariana and I chose cover a wide range of global issues. Poverty, economic strife, a war-torn country or territory, and humanitarian crises are all covered and impact millions. Our background guide will set the stage for the topic and provide a solid foundation for research. I am very excited to see how you build on this base knowledge in your position paper and at the conference in March.

We are here to assist you; please reach out if you have any questions about research, resources, the background guide, or just want to say hello. I am looking forward to meeting you all in March. NHSMUN 2025 is just right around the corner!

Sincerely,

David Phipps

Director, UNSC-B Session II

[nhsmun.unsc-b@imuna.org](mailto:nhsmun.unsc-b@imuna.org)



## Table of Contents

A Note on the NHSMUN Difference	5
A Note on Research and Preparation	7
Committee History	8
Simulation	10

## The Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh **11**

Introduction	12
History and Description of the Issue	13
Current Status	21
Bloc Analysis	26
Committee Mission	28

## The Situation in Afghanistan **30**

Introduction	31
History and Description of the Issue	32
Current Status	43
Bloc Analysis	49
Committee Mission	51

Research and Preparation Questions	52
Important Documents	53
Works Cited	54

## 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  
Secretary-General

Jordan Baker  
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](mailto:info@imuna.org).

**Delegations that do not submit position papers will be ineligible 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> Currently, these include Algeria, Denmark, Greece, Guyana, Pakistan, Panama, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Somalia, and South Korea.<sup>4</sup>

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. Since February 16, 1946, the veto has been cast a total of 310 times. Specifically, the veto has been used 154 times by the former USSR/Russia, 87 times by the United States, 32 times by the United Kingdom, and less than 20 times by China and France.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> 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. While the veto was most frequently used during the early years of the UN and the Cold War, P5 members continue to use the veto power when their foreign policies and national interests are at risk. However, this has prevented the Council’s ability to address humanitarian crises.<sup>7</sup> Most recently, the veto has prevented the Council’s condemnation of the chemical weapons attack in Syria or the establishment of criminal tribunals in Ukraine.<sup>8</sup> This tension has led to resolutions modifying the use of the veto, such as Resolution 76/262, passed on April 26, 2022, which mandates that the General Assembly meets within 10 days every time a veto is cast in the Security Council to debate why the veto was cast.<sup>9</sup>

The Security Council has passed 2751 resolutions thus far. These resolutions focus mainly on the peaceful resolution of international disputes through negotiations and arbitration.<sup>10</sup> Peacekeeping missions are one of the Council’s most visible forms of conflict management. These missions work to protect civilians, facilitate political processes, promote human rights, and

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 United Nations Security Council. “What is the Security Council?”/United Nations Official Website. Security Council. 2020. <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/current-members>

5 “Peace & Security Data Hub,” United Nations, last accessed September 29, 2024, <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DPPA-SCVETOES>.

6 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/>.

7 “The Veto: UN Security Council Working Methods,” Security Council Report, last modified December 16, 2020, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-security-council-working-methods/the-veto.php>.

8 Thompson, Landgren, and Romita, “The United Nations in Hindsight: Challenging the Power of the Security Council Veto;” “Russia Uses Veto to End UN Investigation of Syria Chemical Attacks,” *The Guardian*, last modified October 24, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/24/russia-uses-veto-end-un-investigation-chemical-attacks>.

9 Rebecca Barber, “The U.N. General Assembly’s Veto Initiative Turns One. Is It Working?” *Just Security*, last modified April 26, 2023, <https://www.justsecurity.org/86140/the-u-n-general-assemblys-veto-initiative-turns-one-is-it-working/>.

10 Council on Foreign Relations, “The UN Security Council;” “Resolutions Adopted by the Security Council in 2024 Security Council,” United Nations, last accessed September 21, 2024, <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/resolutions-adopted-security-council-2024/>.



more.<sup>11</sup> In the past 75 years, over one million peacekeepers from 125 countries have served in 71 peacekeeping missions.<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup>

Examples of the Security Council's important role in peacekeeping missions to stabilize conflict zones and protect civilians are abundant. Between 1992-1993, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) led the peaceful transition and democratic elections after several years of civil war and authoritarian rule under the Khmer Rouge regime.<sup>14</sup> Perhaps one of the UNSC's most significant actions was its authorization of military force during the Gulf War in Iraq; UNSC Resolution 678 authorized the use of "all necessary means" to liberate Kuwait and led to the expulsion of Iraqi forces in 1991.<sup>15</sup>

Aside from other UN bodies, the Security Council has worked with many international organizations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), to maintain international peace and security. The Security Council has aided in providing the mandate for NATO's operations in areas like the Western Balkans, Afghanistan, and Libya.<sup>16</sup> Considering the Security Council's power and influence, delegates must treat these issues with care and reflection.

---

11 "Maintain International Peace and Security," United Nations, last accessed September 21, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/our-work/maintain-international-peace-and-security>.

12 "UN Peacekeeping," Better World Campaign, last accessed September 21, 2024, <https://betterworldcampaign.org/un-peacekeeping>.

13 "Security Council," United Nations, last accessed September 21, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/security-council>.

14 UNTAC, "Cambodia - UNTAC." United Nations, Completed Peacekeeping Operations, last accessed October 3, 2024 <https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/untacbackgr1.html/>.

15 United Nations Security Council. Resolution 678. A/RES/678/2. (Nov. 29, 1990), [securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Chap%20VII%20SRES%20678.pdf](https://www.un.org/peace/peacekeeping/678.html)

16 "Relations with the United Nations," NATO, last modified, July 25, 2023, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50321.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50321.htm).

## 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.



UNSC-B

NHSMUN 2025



# TOPIC A: THE SITUATION IN NAGORNO-KARABAKH

Photo Credit: Rob

## Introduction

Nagorno-Karabakh has historically been a region that has seen conflicts between various groups. The region's turbulent history began in the fifth and sixth centuries B.C.E with the fall of the Roman Empire.<sup>1</sup> The land that would become modern-day Armenia soon established itself culturally, with the Armenian language becoming more common and Christianity being adopted by the sixth century AD.<sup>2</sup> The region was conquered by Arabs, Turks, and Mongols, in the eighth, 11th, and 13th centuries, respectively.<sup>3</sup> The territories that became part of Nagorno-Karabakh were established as *melikdoms* or small noble kingdoms. These small kingdoms served as buffer states against the Russian Empire and were given to loyal families by Jahan Shah under Persian rule.<sup>4</sup> Simultaneously, the land where modern-day Azerbaijan is located has historically been Iranian territory. Like Armenia, it was born from the ashes of the Caucasus Albanian state and adopted Christianity with Armenia. However, after Mongol rule, the Safavid Iranian Empire conquered the land and converted the region to Shia Islam in the 16th century. Much of modern-day Nagorno-Karabakh was isolated from Iranian territory as a khanate (a khan state) within Azerbaijani land.

The Persian Empire later fell to the Russian Empire, and the Treaty of Gulistan transferred the region's ownership to the Russian Empire.<sup>5</sup> This signaled a major turning point in the region's history. Nearly two millennia of history between changing regimes and empires resulted in a diverse ethnic group with shifting borders. For the next century, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh continued to be ruled by the Russian Empire. After another war the Persian Empire lost, the Treaty of Turkmenchay seceded Azerbaijan from the Russian Empire. Christian Armenians were far more supportive of Russian control than the Muslim Azerbaijanis. As a result, Russia used the new treaty to begin the relocation of ethnic Armenians to Nagorno-Karabakh to consolidate power.<sup>6</sup> The territory became more ethnically Armenian over the next decade, as Muslim ethnic Azerbaijanis fled the region. 1905 saw the first skirmishes between Azerbaijanis and Armenians over the Karabakh Oblast.<sup>7</sup>

World War I saw the decline of the Russian Empire. Despite a small period of independence, in 1920 the Red Army invaded the Azerbaijan Republic, then Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia. Nagorno-Karabakh was given to the new Azerbaijani Soviet Republic, despite the large contingent of ethnic Armenians.<sup>8</sup> Despite protests, the status quo remained as such for 60 years. The Caucasus region remained in relative peace throughout the Second World War and the subsequent Cold War. As the Soviet Union began its decline, the Regional Soviet Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh formally requested a transfer of power from Azerbaijan to Armenia. This would better reflect the ethnic makeup of the territory. Despite the Soviet Union declining, Nagorno-Karabakh seceded from the Armenian SSR.<sup>9</sup> As a result of this secession and long-simmering tensions, minor skirmishes occurred, with the scale and casualty counts rising. These tensions peaked during the First Nagorno-Karabakh War. Tens of thousands died in the

1 Library of Congress, "Research Guides: The Caucasus: Cartographic Resources in the Library of Congress: An Abbreviated History of Maps of the Caucasus," accessed July 20, 2024, <https://guides.loc.gov/caucasus-maps/contents-history>.

2 John Wright, Richard Schofield, and Suzanne Goldenberg, *Transcaucasian Boundaries* (Routledge, 2003).

3 Wright, Goldenberg, and Schofield, *Transcaucasian Boundaries*.

4 Robert H Hewsen, *Russian-Armenian Relations, 1700-1828* (Society for Armenian Studies, 1984).

5 Cynthia Brown and Farhad Karim, *Communal Violence and Human Rights*, Human Rights Watch, 1995, [https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954\\_405796](https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954_405796)

6 Treaty of Turkmenchay (1828), accessed July 21, 2024, [https://mfa.gov.az/files/shares/Treaty of Turkmenchay.pdf](https://mfa.gov.az/files/shares/Treaty%20of%20Turkmenchay.pdf).

7 Cynthia Brown and Farhad Karim, *Communal Violence and Human Rights* (Human Rights Watch, 1995), [https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954\\_405796](https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954_405796)

8 Ashot Beglaryan, "The population of Nagorno-Karabakh for a year. Union of Armenians of Russia - Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. Excursion into history," Losevskya, accessed July 21, 2024, <https://losevskaya.ru/en/zdorove/chislenost-naseleniya-nagornogo-karabaha-nagod-soyuz-armyan.html>

9 *The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Legal Analysis* (Berlin, Germany: Springer, 2010), <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-642-14393-9>.

conflict, ending in a ceasefire in 1994 brokered by Russia.<sup>10</sup> The territory remained under Armenian control.

As a condition of the ceasefire, Russia sent 1,800 peacekeepers to occupy 49 observer posts on the Nagorno-Karabakh border.<sup>11</sup> However, the ceasefire continued to be violated and Armenia and Azerbaijan continued to fight across the border. 2016 saw the greatest escalation since the first war, with clashes resulting in 60 casualties and Azerbaijan retaking some minor villages. Fighting continued until the summer of 2020 when tensions led to the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War. Thousands died in the 44-day conflict. Additionally, the war led to Azerbaijan retaking provinces surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh. The conflict ended through another Russian-brokered ceasefire on November 9, 2020.<sup>12</sup>

Soon after the war, Azerbaijan began retaking control of additional territory and villages in 2022. It soon took control of the Lachin Corridor which worsened tensions. This was a road that allowed peacekeepers, food, and medical resources to enter Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan restricted access to the corridor, preventing Red Cross envoys from entering. Suddenly, on September 19, 2023, Azerbaijan announced an antiterrorism operation and stormed Nagorno-Karabakh in hours.<sup>13</sup> Tens of thousands of ethnic Armenians fled, and Azerbaijan called for the dissolution of the territory. As of the first of January, 2024, Nagorno-Karabakh ceased to exist and was formally dissolved.

Nagorno-Karabakh is a region that has seen conflicts for centuries, torn between Armenian and Azerbaijani control. Historical tensions, recent conflicts, and the lack of international support have left thousands of civilians in the region stranded without assistance. If action is not taken, a conflict could potentially arise again. This would not only

continue the cycle of violence in the region but also make the conditions of innocent civilians even worse.

## History and Description of the Issue

### Historical Roots of Nagorno-Karabakh

Before addressing modern Armenian and Azerbaijani relations, it is important to consider their historical backgrounds. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan are located in the South Caucasus region, between Europe and Asia. Located next to Türkiye, Russia, and Iran, the Caucasus region is at a geopolitical crossroads.<sup>14</sup> Armenia and Azerbaijan are caught between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), representing interests from the West and East respectively. To describe the history and understand the alignment of the Nagorno-Karabakh region, it is necessary to untangle historical narratives being told from Azerbaijani and Armenian sources.

Armenian presence in the Caucasus region can be traced through early history to the sixth century B.C.E. The first inscription of the name Armenia was discovered on what is referred to as the Babylonian World Map.<sup>15</sup> It is the earliest surviving record of the geographical positioning of Armenia and what is now known as the Caucasus. For some time, the region was under the control of the Roman Empire until the empire was dissolved. Armenia quickly sought independence and separated from the Caucasus Albanian kingdom that rose after the Roman Empire fell. The Caucasus Albanian kingdom became the first country to adopt Christianity around the fourth century AD, and the modern territory of Armenia began to take place.<sup>16</sup> The Armenian language, established around the time of the adoption of Christianity, became prevalent in the

<sup>10</sup> Center for Preventative Action, "Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict," Global Conflict Tracker, last modified on March 20, 2024, <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/nagorno-karabakh-conflict>.

<sup>11</sup> Los Angeles Times, "Armenia, Azerbaijan Agree to a Cease-Fire : Caucasus: Moscow Brokers Truce in Former Soviet Union's Longest-Running Conflict. but Fighting Continues.," May 17, 1994, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1994-05-17-mn-58811-story.html>.

<sup>12</sup> International Crisis Group, "Upholding the Ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia," September 28, 2022, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/caucasus/armenia-azerbaijan-nagorno-karabakh-conflict/upholding-ceasefire>.

<sup>13</sup> Tim Lister et al., "Azerbaijan Launches Operation against Armenian Forces in Nagorno-Karabakh," CNN, September 20, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/09/19/asia/armenia-azerbaijan-nagorno-karabakh-bombardment-intl/index.html>.

<sup>14</sup> Emil Sanamyan, "On Origins of the 'Caucasus Region,'" USC Institute of Armenian Studies, June 21, 2020, <https://armenian.usc.edu/on-origins-of-the-caucasus-region/>.

<sup>15</sup> Library of Congress, "Research Guides: The Caucasus: Cartographic Resources in the Library of Congress: An Abbreviated History of Maps of the Caucasus," accessed July 20, 2024, <https://guides.loc.gov/caucasus-maps/contents-history>.

<sup>16</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, accessed July 20, 2024, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/armenia/>.

Albanian dialects spoken in the region. The last traces of the Caucasian Albanian language were recorded on inscriptions on tablets from the sixth and seventh centuries.<sup>17</sup> In the eighth century, the Caucasus Albanian territory collapsed. A variety of empires and kingdoms took control of the Armenian land. This included the Arabs in the eighth century, the Seljuk Turks in the 11th century, and the Mongols in the 13th century.<sup>18</sup>

The Mongol invasion led to another era of change throughout the region. Armenian culture prospered and Christianity continued to spread in the region.<sup>19</sup> The ruler Jahan Shah established “buffer states” in the northeastern region of Armenia. With this, he chose families loyal to him to be meliks, or kings, for each of the territories. This included the lands of Karabakh. The Persian Empire returned under the Safavid regime and took control of the Caucasus region. They ruled the land until it was overtaken by the Ottoman Empire and later the Russian Empire. With Russia’s Peter the Great’s rule over the region and the death of Nader Shah in the 18th century, relations between the various ethnic groups in the region began to slowly fall apart. Soon, Karabakh and Azerbaijani territory fell under the management of Prince Tsitsianov.

Azerbaijan has also gone through a similarly complex history. Historically, what is now Azerbaijan had been settled by Iranian tribes. However, modern Azerbaijani history began with the formation of the Caucasus Albanian state, a territory shared by Armenia and Georgia today. Like Armenia, the territory adopted Christianity as the main religion. The land was captured by the Mongols before being taken by the Safavid Iranian Empire in the 16th Century. During this time the region converted to Shia Islam. Under Iranian rule, Karabakh khanates were established under Azerbaijani Panah-Ali Khan Javanshir within Azerbaijani territory. They were established under the condition that they assist in defending

against an attack from the Persian Empire. This signaled a shift in the historical control of the region.<sup>20</sup> The Khan of Karabakh fought off influence from outside powers until 1805 when they finally fell to the Russian Empire and Persian forces. The region was officially recognized as Russian territory with the signing of the Treaty of Gulistan in 1813.<sup>21</sup> The Karabakh Khanate ultimately became fully absorbed into the Russian Empire in 1822.

The origins of the term “Karabakh” are derived from this period. Azerbaijani sources say that it is a term taken from the Turkish meaning “black garden.” However, the first written account of ‘Qarabagh’ comes from the Persian scholar Hamdallah Mustawfi al-Qazwini in the mid-fourteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Another common name for the region, used primarily in Armenian history, is Artsakh, and is derived from the old Armenian “tsakh” meaning woods, and was used in the historical text before “Karabakh”. Russian influence added the descriptor “Nagorno”, a Russian root meaning “Mountainous”. The naming of the region shows the clear divide in ethnic groups, in addition to the regional history.

The territory has been in a constantly shifting state since it was first formed in the fifth century B.C.E. under the ancient Kingdom of Armenia.<sup>23</sup> Looking to classify Karabakh as a solely Armenian or Azerbaijani territory concerning sovereignty in its early history has continued to be a subject of debate. It is a region at a crossroads, within Armenian and Azerbaijani territory at different points in time. Armenian-backed sources claim that the region was in the province of Artsakh and independent of Azerbaijan. Meanwhile, Azerbaijani sources claim that what is now called Nagorno-Karabakh was within the Caucasus Albanian territory along with Azerbaijan.

Historically, the region has been predominantly Christian. Armenia and Caucasian Albania were among the first to adopt Christianity as the state religion. However, through the

17 John Wright, Richard Schofield, and Suzanne Goldenberg, *Transcaucasian Boundaries* (Routledge, 2003).

18 Wright, Goldenberg, and Schofield. *Transcaucasian Boundaries*

19 Wright, Goldenberg, and Schofield. *Transcaucasian Boundaries*

20 Heiko Krüger, *The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Legal Analysis* (Berlin, Germany: Springer, 2010), <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-642-14393-9>.

21 Cynthia Brown and Farhad Karim. *Communal Violence and Human Rights*. Human Rights Watch, 1995. [https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954\\_405796](https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954_405796)

22 Emil Sanamyan, “On Origins of Geographic Term ‘Karabakh,’” USC Institute of Armenian Studies, June 21, 2020, <https://armenian.usc.edu/on-origins-of-geographic-term-karabakh/>.

23 “Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh): Historical and Geographical Perspectives,” Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh): Historical and Geographical Perspectives, accessed July 20, 2024, [http://www.nkrusa.org/country\\_profile/history.shtml](http://www.nkrusa.org/country_profile/history.shtml).

occupation of the Persian Empire and the influence of Islam, much of the Christian Armenian population was forced out of Azerbaijan. Persecution and the sacking of Christian temples led to many followers being forced out of their homelands. Most fled to the more mountainous parts of the region to escape religious violence. Today, this mountainous region where many Christians fled to is known as the Karabakh region. Religion also ties closely with the ethnic makeup of the area. A majority of Armenians are Christian while Azerbaijanis are predominantly Muslim. It is commonly accepted that ethnic Azerbaijanis accounted for much of the historical population within Nagorno-Karabakh. Ethnic Armenians made up anywhere from 8.4 percent to 21 percent of the historical population. Immediately following the Russian takeover, this number jumped to around 30 percent to one-third of the territorial population.<sup>24</sup>

The Nagorno-Karabakh region has been under radically shifting control. From the early fifth century B.C.E. to the modern day, the region has been torn between regional powers. Between the Romans, Mongols, Ottomans, and Persians, there has always been conflict, shifting territories, cultural and ethnic influences, and takeovers. However, the region now fell under Russian control after the Russo-Persian Wars.

### Soviet Regional Control

The start of the 19th century gave way to defining historical events that would set the stage for the modern-day Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Through the reign of Alexander I, Georgia was officially annexed by Russia in 1801, as was the capital of the Ganja Khanate in 1804.<sup>25</sup> Named after the military commander of the Russian Army's wife Elizaveta, the imperial government abolished the Karabakh Khanate and created the military district of Elizavetpol.<sup>26</sup> The abolition of the Khanate also led to the creation of the Kurekchay Treaty of eleven

articles, which mandated that Ibrahim Khalil, then khan of the Karabakh Khanate, was to submit to the Russian emperor, denounce his allegiance to the Qajar Shah, and pay an annual tribute. Additionally, the Russian Empire was given full control over the Khanate's external affairs. In return, Ibrahim Khalil would be recognized as the local ruler of the region with control over domestic affairs.<sup>27</sup>

The land that made up Karabakh was seceded to Russia from the Persian Empire in 1813 with the Treaty of Gulistan. In the following decade, disagreements on territorial disputes led to the Russian and Persian empires entering another large-scale conflict, causing Persia to lose a significant quantity of its territorial possessions in the Southern Caucasus.<sup>28</sup> The Second Russo-Persian War (1826-1828) ended in a conclusive victory for the Russian Empire, with yet another treaty. The Treaty of Turkmenchay, signed on February 10, 1828, split Azerbaijan into two territories. The Northern part, what became modern-day Azerbaijan, was seceded from the Russian Empire. The southern half remained under Persian control and is now in modern-day Iran.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, Iran ceded to the Russians the Khanates of Erivan and Nakhchivan while agreeing to not prevent the resurgence of Armenians from Iran to Karabakh and other regions of the southern Caucasus under new Russian rule.<sup>30</sup>

The Armenian Christian population of the Caucasus region continued to be a minority group. Additionally, the Muslim ethnic Azerbaijanis were far less supportive of a Russian regime. Russia leveraged the newly signed treaty to begin the relocation and concentration of Armenians and Christians back to the land they controlled. The Russian government also began to turn Karabakh into a Christian Armenian stronghold to consolidate its influence and power.<sup>31</sup> Around 57,000 to 200,000 Armenians were estimated to have been

24 Jamāl Javānshīr Qarābāghī, George A. Bournoutian, and Adigözāl Beg, *Two Chronicles on the History of Karabagh: Mirza Jamal Javanshir's Tarikh-e Karabagh and Mirza Adigözāl Beg's Karabagh-Name* (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda, 2004).

25 Ercan Karakoc, "A Brief Overview on Karabakh history from Past to Today", *Journal of Human Sciences*, no. 2, (May 2011), <https://www.j-humansciences.com/ojs/index.php/IJHS/article/view/2026>

26 Karakoc, "A Brief Overview on Karabakh history from Past to Today"

27 Karakoc, "A Brief Overview on Karabakh history from Past to Today"

28 Galina Yemelianova, "The De Facto State of Nagorno-Karabakh: Historical and Geopolitical Perspectives", *Europe-Asia Studies*, no. 8, (October 2023), 1336-1359: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/09668136.2023.2214708?needAccess=true>

29 The World Museums Network, "Treaty of Turkmenchay 1828," accessed July 20, 2024, <https://museu.ms/article/details/126226>.

30 Galina Yemelianova, "The De Facto State of Nagorno-Karabakh: Historical and Geopolitical Perspectives", *Europe-Asia Studies*, no. 8, (October 2023), 1336-1359: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/09668136.2023.2214708?needAccess=true>

31 Treaty of Turkmenchay (1828), accessed July 21, 2024, [https://mfa.gov.az/files/shares/Treaty of Turkmenchay.pdf](https://mfa.gov.az/files/shares/Treaty%20of%20Turkmenchay.pdf).

relocated at this time.<sup>32</sup> The Administrative Department of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Presidential Library claims that, “18,000 Armenian families were resettled(…)” during the Russo-Persian War, and that “over 40,000 South Azerbaijani and 84,000 Turkish Armenians were resettled to the South Caucasus and settled in the most fertile lands of the Ganja, Karabakh, and Iravan khanates(…)” In response, an estimated 35,000 Muslims from Erivan and Karabakh fled to Azerbaijani territory.<sup>33</sup>

While Russo-Persian confrontations were centered around disputes regarding the Caucasus and northern Iran, Russo-Ottoman conflicts covered a larger area. The Russians and Ottomans often fought over the Caucasus, eastern Türkiye, present-day Ukraine, Crimea, Moldova, Romania, and southeastern territories in Europe.<sup>34</sup> Karabakh was merged into the Kaspijskaya Oblast in 1840, and the Governorate Elisavetpol in 1867.<sup>35</sup> Combined with the relocation of Christian Armenians to the Oblast, this showed clear favoritism and preference towards Armenians. Russia saw the relocation of Armenians into Karabakh as a way to decrease Persian influence and control. The conflicts from 1853 to 1856 in Crimea and 1876 to 1878 in Serbia between the Russian and Ottoman Empires continued to displace thousands of civilians. The displacement led to thousands fleeing into the Nagorno-Karabakh region which diversified the ethnic population even more. Hundreds of thousands of Christian Armenian immigrants relocated to the Karabakh region as a result of ethnic, social, and religious divides. This wave of immigration would forever change the ethnic identity of the region. Despite rising tensions, no major conflict broke out between the Azerbaijanis and Armenians. There were some small skirmishes between Azerbaijan and Armenia

surrounding the identity and control of the Karabakh Oblast. Additionally, tensions grew over the preferential treatment of Christian Armenians over Muslim Azerbaijanis. Despite the lack of escalation, this was the first sign of ethnic tensions rising and becoming violent in Nagorno-Karabakh.<sup>36</sup> These skirmishes would start a long series of conflicts over the region.

After a couple of decades of relative peace and stability, the world was once again at war. The assassination of Franz Ferdinand, Archduke of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, would lead to the start of World War I. With the world now distracted, the Ottoman Empire began systematically targeting Armenians living within Ottoman territory. Fueled by radicalization and treatment of Azerbaijani Muslims, the Ottomans began massacring and relocating Armenians outside of Ottoman land.<sup>37</sup> The number of deaths as a result of this forced relocation ranged from 664,000 to 1,200,000 Armenian deaths.<sup>38</sup> The forced relocation and massacre of Armenians by the Ottomans would lead to many calling this period the Armenian Genocide. As a result of this, Armenian and Azerbaijani relations deteriorated significantly with both sides refusing to communicate, nor acknowledge each other. As World War I entered its final years, the Russian Empire’s influence began to weaken. British troops entered the Caucasus on behalf of Azerbaijan to stabilize the region and establish an independent and sovereign country for the Azerbaijani people. Skirmishes arose between the two countries, primarily over ethnic tensions.<sup>39</sup> The League of Nations, an international organization created after the First World War to provide a forum for resolving international disputes, declined to provide international recognition for Azerbaijan and Armenia.<sup>40</sup> The lack of recognition would provide an opening for other regional powers to intervene in the region and take advantage

32 Heiko Krüger, *The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Legal Analysis* (Berlin, Germany: Springer, 2010), <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-642-14393-9>.

33 Krüger, *The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Legal Analysis*.

34 Galina Yemelianova, “The De Facto State of Nagorno-Karabakh: Historical and Geopolitical Perspectives”, *Europe-Asia Studies*, no. 8, (October 2023), 1336-1359: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/09668136.2023.2214708?needAccess=true>

35 John Wright, Richard Schofield, and Suzanne Goldenberg, *Transcaucasian Boundaries* (Routledge, 2003).

36 Cynthia Brown and Farhad Karim. *Communal Violence and Human Rights*. Human Rights Watch, 1995. [https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954\\_405796](https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954_405796)

37 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “The Armenian Genocide (1915-16): Overview”, accessed July 20, 2024, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-armenian-genocide-1915-16-overview>.

38 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “The Armenian Genocide (1915-16): In Depth,”

39 Cynthia Brown and Farhad Karim. *Communal Violence and Human Rights*. Human Rights Watch, 1995. [https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954\\_405796](https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954_405796)

40 Heiko Krüger, *The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Legal Analysis* (Berlin, Germany: Springer, 2010), <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-642-14393-9>.



of the lack of international protection.

In the spring of 1920, the Bolsheviks arrived at the border of the Azerbaijani Republic with the Red Army. The arrival of the Red Army led to a quick surrender by the Azerbaijani Republic and allowed the Soviet Union to occupy the country. The Soviet Union was able to swiftly invade Azerbaijan given that almost all Azerbaijani troops were engaged in suppressing Armenian riots in Karabakh. This left the northern borders completely unprotected.<sup>41</sup> Shortly after, Karabakh was invaded and the Soviet Union awarded the land to the Azerbaijani Soviet Republic. Armenia was subsequently invaded, with the entire Caucasus region now under the control of the Soviet Union.<sup>42</sup> The post-war period saw Nagorno-Karabakh transformed into a heavily Armenian Christian stronghold. At the time, it was estimated that 92 percent of the population was Armenian.<sup>43</sup> Despite the majority Armenian population, Karabakh was given to Azerbaijan by the Soviet Union. This led to numerous protests and petitions to secede control of the region to Armenians. Even after numerous protests and complaints by the Armenian people, Karabakh would remain under Azerbaijani control for the next 60 years.

### Prelude to the First Nagorno-Karabakh War

After the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) took over in the spring of 1920, the region has been marked by constant, but relatively casualty-free protests. The aftermath of World War 1 saw the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh at an all-time high, with a reported 94.4 percent of the population identifying as Armenian in 1921. However, this number fell to 75.9 percent (123,076) and 76.9 percent (145,450) Armenians in 1979 and 1989, respectively.<sup>44</sup> However, while Armenia-Azerbaijan relations did not see any major conflicts, the Soviet Union was in the midst of the Cold War. During this decades-long international confrontation with the United States over global supremacy, the Soviet Union slowly began

breaking down. The Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev took office in 1985 and enacted policies that led to the eventual decline of Soviet influence in the region.

The *glasnost* and *perestroika* policies pioneered by Gorbachev were developed to improve the economic, political, and social progress of the USSR. These unsuccessful policies led to more nationalistic and territorial discussions within the Soviet Union. The Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic (AzSSR) and the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (ArSSR) once again revisited their hostility over the control of Karabakh. 1987 marked the start of the conflict, with Armenians petitioning the USSR Politburo to return Karabakh to the ArSSR, removing its control from the Azerbaijani state. The petition was rejected.<sup>45</sup>

On February 20, 1988, the Regional Soviet Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh formally requested to join Armenia. Soviet control was weakening and the regional government saw an opportunity to take advantage of the weakened government to merge with Armenia. However, the Soviet Union denied the request, citing Article 78 of the Soviet Constitution. It stated that “the territory of a Union Republic may not be altered without its consent. The boundaries between Union Republics may be altered by mutual agreement of the Republics concerned, subject to ratification by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.”<sup>46</sup> This, however, did not stop them, and in July 1988 the Regional Soviet of Nagorno-Karabakh decided to secede from the Azerbaijani SSR to the Armenian SSR.<sup>47</sup>

Civilians in the territory are caught in the middle of the territory dispute. As a result of Armenian protests, Azerbaijanis feel threatened and begin to flee the region. The tensions came to a peak on February 22, 1988, when Azerbaijanis launched strikes against Armenia after two Azerbaijanis were reported dead in a neighboring administrative district

<sup>41</sup> Anar Isgenderli, *Realities of Azerbaijan* (USA, Xlibris Corporation, 2011), chap. 4

<sup>42</sup> John Wright, Richard Schofield, and Suzanne Goldenberg, *Transcaucasian Boundaries* (Routledge, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> Ashot Beglaryan, “The population of Nagorno-Karabakh for a year. Union of Armenians of Russia - Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. Excursion into history”, Losevskaya, <https://losevskaya.ru/en/zdorove/chislennost-naseleniya-nagornogo-karabaha-na-god-soyuz-armyan.html>

<sup>44</sup> John Wright, Richard Schofield, and Suzanne Goldenberg, *Transcaucasian Boundaries* (Routledge, 2003).

<sup>45</sup> Karakoc, “A Brief Overview on Karabakh history from Past to Today”

<sup>46</sup> USSR Constitution, accessed July 21, 2024, <https://www.marxists.org/history/ussr/government/constitution/1977/constitution-ussr-1977.pdf>.

<sup>47</sup> Heiko Krüger, *The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Legal Analysis* (Berlin, Germany: Springer, 2010), <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-642-14393-9>.

to Nagorno-Karabakh. After the strike, 32 Armenian deaths were reported, but exact death counts vary.<sup>48</sup> In response to this, the USSR formed a “Special Governance Committee” to oversee the region. The Armenian National Movement rose as a response and became the most popular political movement in the region. Less than a month after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Armenia and Karabakh declared their independence and claimed Karabakh to be a part of Armenia.<sup>49</sup>

After the declaration, Armenia-Azerbaijan relations fell to an all-time low. As a result of the declaration of separation, small skirmishes took place between the two countries. These skirmishes escalated, and Azerbaijanis began to relocate Armenians away from the territory near Karabakh. The skirmishes eventually escalated into the First Nagorno-Karabakh War. In the opening stages of the war, Armenia took control of a small village, Khojaly, and reportedly massacred hundreds of civilians in the largest single killing during the First Nagorno-Karabakh War.<sup>50</sup> Meanwhile, Azerbaijan took control of a village, Maragha, killing a reported 45 civilians and taking 29 hostages.<sup>51</sup> Though Azerbaijan had initial victories, they eventually fell to the Karabakh and Armenian forces. Peace talks began shortly afterwards with Iran and Russia urging a peaceful resolution to the conflict. However, no agreement was formed until a ceasefire was agreed on in May 1994.

The First Nagorno-Karabakh War had numerous long-lasting implications. The first is the casualty count, with tens of thousands reported to have died on either side with an upper estimate of 30,000 civilians and combatants dead.<sup>52</sup> In addition, the conflict saw hundreds of thousands of refugees.

Approximately 500,000 Azerbaijanis fled as a direct result of Armenian offenses. The total number of refugees and displaced persons in Azerbaijan was estimated to be one million.<sup>53</sup>

Following the end of the First Nagorno-Karabakh War, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) was called upon to mediate ceasefire agreements. They sought a proposal that comprehensively ended all armed conflict within the region while establishing a political method for settling the region’s sovereignty. This plan was rejected by Armenia and Azerbaijan. Their next proposal, the “step-by-step approach,” would progressively demilitarize the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh.<sup>54</sup> However, this was quickly rejected by the Armenian government. Their next plan was a “common state” government in which Karabakh would be functionally independent and prevent Azerbaijanis from entering, meanwhile, Karabakh residents would be allowed to vote in Azerbaijani elections.<sup>55</sup> This final proposal was struck by Azerbaijan, as they claimed Karabakh was “impossible.”<sup>56</sup> The Russian Government was also critical in the formation and upkeep of the 1994 ceasefire. As a condition of the ceasefire, all troops had to move three to six miles outside of the border of the territory. In addition, 49 observer posts were manned by 1,800 Russian peacekeepers.<sup>57</sup>

Despite the appearance of a peaceful or solved crisis, it was anything but. Violations of the ceasefire consistently occurred, and intermittent clashes were common with casualties rising consistently. The conflict reached a peak in April 2016. On April 2, the Four-Day War began. Azerbaijan claims that it was in response to an Armenian attack and shelling. With Karabakh backed by Armenia defending against Azerbaijan,

48 John Wright, Richard Schofield, and Suzanne Goldenberg, *Transcaucasian Boundaries* (Routledge, 2003).

49 Council on Foreign Relations, “Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker,” accessed July 20, 2024, <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/nagorno-karabakh-conflict>.

50 Alican Tekingunduz, “31 Years on, Horrors of Khojaly Massacre Still Haunt Azerbaijanis,” TRT World - Breaking News, Live Coverage, Opinions and Videos, February 24, 2023, <https://www.trtworld.com/asia/31-years-on-horrors-of-khojaly-massacre-still-haunt-azerbaijanis-65623>.

51 Lucy Poghosyan, “The Maragha Massacre: The Other Face of the Coin in the Karabakh War,” The Armenian Weekly, April 10, 2020, <https://armenianweekly.com/2020/04/10/the-maragha-massacre-the-other-face-of-the-coin-in-the-karabakh-war/>.

52 Council on Foreign Relations, “Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict”

53 Brown, Cynthia and Farhad Karim. *Communal Violence and Human Rights*. Human Rights Watch, 1995. [https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954\\_405796](https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954_405796)

54 Minsk Group proposal (‘step-by-step deal’), accessed July 21, 2024, <https://www.legal-tools.org/doc/8760bb/pdf/>.

55 Foreign Policy, “The Minsk Group couldn’t end Azerbaijan and Armenia’s Nagorno-Karabakh conflict”, accessed July 21, 2024, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/07/23/armenia-azerbaijan-nagorno-karabakh-osce-minsk-group-meaningless/>.

56 Anadolu Ajansı, “Azerbaijan Says Peace Deal with Armenia ‘impossible’ While Yerevan’s Constitution Is Unchanged,” accessed July 20, 2024, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/azerbaijan-says-peace-deal-with-armenia-impossible-while-yerevans-constitution-is-unchanged/3242606>.

57 Los Angeles Times, “Armenia, Azerbaijan Agree to a Cease-Fire : Caucasus: Moscow Brokers Truce in Former Soviet Union’s Longest-Running Conflict. but Fighting Continues.” May 17, 1994, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1994-05-17-mn-58811-story.html>.

no side made progress. However, as a result, both Armenia and Azerbaijan admit to 60 casualties on either side. With this small but short offensive, Azerbaijan was successful in retaking a small portion of the Armenian-occupied land surrounding Karabakh.<sup>58</sup> Historians have suggested three potential causes of this: a) this was the product of Russia wanting to expand their influence further south, b) foreign powers like Türkiye or the USA were pushing back against Russian influence, and c) that Azerbaijan wanted to demonstrate their power. Most sources agree, however, that it was Azerbaijan showing a sign of power and influence in the region. Russia was distracted with the occupation of the Donbas region of Ukraine at the time.<sup>59</sup>

Regardless, 2016 marks the most recent reescalation of force since the First Karabakh War. Russia leveraged this conflict to renew the ceasefire that they proposed back in 1994, and again offered peacekeepers. However, outside of this Four Day War and between January 2015 and September 2020, there were 292 reported incidents along the line of conflict, and 260 were

reported dead or wounded as a result of these skirmishes.<sup>60</sup> Tensions continued to develop, and disagreements and border disputes continued to ramp up.

## The Second Nagorno-Karabakh War

The summer of 2020 brought on the further escalation of violence and an increase in fighting along the Azerbaijani and Karabakh border. It was characterized by an uptick in the amount of drone strikes and attacks further testing the ceasefire that was tenuous at best.<sup>61</sup> Small skirmishes led to an ongoing cycle of violence and conflict, with reactionary strikes continuously escalating. Finally, on September 27, 2020, a strike on a civilian population center began the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War. Both Azerbaijan and Armenia began blaming each other. Armenia claimed that Azerbaijan attacked civilians first while Azerbaijan claimed that Armenia was “suppress[ing] Armenia’s combat activity”.<sup>62</sup>

The fighting went on until a Russia-brokered ceasefire was signed on November 9, 2020. Over six weeks, thousands died,

58 “The Four-Day War in Nagorno-Karabakh,” OSW Centre for Eastern Studies, April 19, 2018, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2016-04-06/four-day-war-nagorno-karabakh>.

59 “The four-Day War has diminished the chances of ... - IFSH, accessed July 21, 2024, [https://ifsh.de/file/publication/OSCE\\_Yearbook\\_en/2016/Schmidt-en.pdf](https://ifsh.de/file/publication/OSCE_Yearbook_en/2016/Schmidt-en.pdf).

60 Crisis Group. “The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Visual Explainer.”, June 11, 2024. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/content/nagorno-karabakh-conflict-visual-explainer>

61 Clashes resume on Armenian-azerbaijani border - The Washington Post, accessed July 21, 2024, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/clashes-resume-on-armenian-azerbaijani-border/2020/07/16/7c858fa6-c750-11ea-a825-8722004e4150\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/clashes-resume-on-armenian-azerbaijani-border/2020/07/16/7c858fa6-c750-11ea-a825-8722004e4150_story.html).

62 Al Jazeera, “Fighting Erupts between Armenia, Azerbaijan over Disputed Region,” Al Jazeera, September 27, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/9/27/heavy-fighting-erupts-in-disputed-nagorno-karabakh-region>.

Map of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict following the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war





Azerbaijani people celebrating victory in Karabakh  
Credit: Toghrol Rahimli

thousands more were injured, and hundreds of thousands were displaced. A reported 3,822 Armenian soldiers and civilians died with 208 still missing while Azerbaijan reported 2,906 dead and eight missing.<sup>63</sup> 170 Azerbaijani civilians were reported dead, as were 80 Karabakh civilians. In addition to the humanitarian crisis and loss of life, there was also, yet again, a change in the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. The crisis led to significant losses in land for Nagorno-Karabakh, with Azerbaijan retaking the provinces surrounding Karabakh for the first time in decades. This meant that Karabakh was now effectively an enclave, except for the Lachin Corridor being established as the last remaining piece of land connecting Karabakh to Armenia. This was a significant weakening in the standing of Armenia in the region.<sup>64</sup>

When looking at the overall conflict, it is apparent that Armenia's lack of military innovation led to its defeat. The Armenian military was focused on fighting an attritional war, where 'wearing down' the enemy was the main strategy. In contrast, the Azerbaijani army had adopted a more modern concept of flexible military units. Azerbaijan also relied on mobile combined-arms and artillery units which easily dealt

with the fortified positions of the Armenian military. The Azerbaijani victory was viewed by analysts to be a direct product of their investment into military-grade technologies. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) paved the way to deal with great losses on Armenian personnel and military equipment.<sup>65</sup>

The adoption of the ceasefire, along with the increased presence of Russian peacekeepers near the Lachin Corridor led to more confrontation. In 2021, an International Court of Justice (ICJ) investigation on both Azerbaijan and Armenia was launched after both countries called upon the ICJ to investigate crimes against humanity. Beyond that, Azerbaijan began retaking towns and villages surrounding Karabakh, beginning with the Kartangluh Heights in March of 2022. In the following months, Azerbaijan began controlling villages and towns near Lachin. This was a significant blow to Armenia's ability to assist ethnic Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh since the Lachin Corridor was the final remaining piece of land connecting Armenia to the territory. In December 2022, the Lachin Corridor was blocked by Azerbaijani protestors claiming to be environmental activists. However, these protestors were claimed to be backed by Azerbaijani officials.<sup>66</sup> The protests

<sup>63</sup> Ariel Karlinsky and Orsola Torrisi, "The Casualties of War: An Excess Mortality Estimate of Lives Lost in the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict," Population research and policy review, 2023, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10171164/>.

<sup>64</sup> Ariel Karlinsky and Orsola Torrisi, "The Casualties of War"

<sup>65</sup> Zhirayr Amirkhanyan, "A Failure to Innovate: The Second Nagorno-Karabakh War," *Parameters* 52, no. 1 (2022): 119-134, doi: 10.55540/0031-1723.3133

<sup>66</sup> "Azerbaijan: Blockade of Lachin Corridor Putting Thousands of Lives in Peril Must Be Immediately Lifted," Amnesty International, March 6, 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/02/azerbaijan-blockade-of-lachin-corridor-putting-thousands-of-lives-in>

blocked all Armenian re-supply attempts and food and resources severely diminished within Nagorno-Karabakh. This blockade of the Lachin Corridor eventually restricted access to aid and Red Cross convoys and only allowed the movement of Russian troops and personnel into the region.<sup>67</sup>

Suddenly, on September 19, 2023, Azerbaijan announced an antiterrorism initiative in Karabakh and fully took over the region in a matter of days. In this sudden invasion, an estimated 200 lives were lost.<sup>68</sup> Now under Azerbaijani control, tens of thousands of Armenians fled the territory in a mass exodus. A UN report from October 1, 2023, found that “between 50 and 1,000 ethnic Armenians remain in the Karabakh region.”<sup>69</sup> With over 100,000 Armenians leaving, Karabakh lost nearly its entire population but was now under the control of Azerbaijan after centuries of fighting. In the wake of the Azerbaijani takeover, yet another ceasefire brokered by Russia was signed. The Azerbaijani government called for a dissolution of Nagorno-Karabakh. Shortly afterward, the President of Nagorno-Karabakh, stated that “the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) shall cease to exist.” The territory formally dissolved on January 1, 2024, with Russian peacekeepers leaving the area in April 2024.<sup>70</sup>

## Current Status

### The Current Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh

The current status of Nagorno-Karabakh is grim. On September 19, 2023, Azerbaijani military forces entered the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. In less than a day, the Azerbaijani forces completely overwhelmed the Armenian-supported Nagorno-Karabakh forces and retook the territory.<sup>71</sup> This quickly led to a

ceasefire on September 20, negotiated by Russian peacekeepers sent in as a response to the Second Nagorno Karabakh War in 2020. This ceasefire required Armenia to withdraw all military forces from the territory, in addition to Karabakh giving up their weapons. A week after the ceasefire was signed on the 28th, the Azerbaijani government reported 1151 small arms, 39 mortars, 18 armored vehicles, 84 grenade launchers, and hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition, rockets, and grenades were all turned in.<sup>72</sup>

Along with the ceasefire came the question of “reintegration”. Historically, wars between Armenia and Azerbaijan have involved the relocation of populations. The Russian Empire relocated ethnic Armenians to the territory after the Treaty of Turkmenchay in 1828.<sup>73</sup> Later, during World War I, the Ottoman Empire (modern-day Türkiye) relocated hundreds of thousands of Armenians out of Ottoman territory and into Armenia. In the process, 600,000 Armenians were murdered in a massacre that is still denied by Türkiye and Azerbaijan.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, after the First Nagorno-Karabakh War, hundreds of thousands were left displaced as a result of the war-torn territory, in addition to Armenia regaining territory in the war. The Second Nagorno-Karabakh War saw a similar thing happen.

Historically, the territory was occupied by ethnic Armenians since the Russian relocation and consolidation after Turkmenchay. However, as a result of the sudden seizure of land with the twenty-four-hour offensive, now the future of the ethnic population of the region was uncertain at best. With the onset of the sudden shelling, thousands began to leave the territory. It was reported that, as the Karabakh military forces were relinquishing their weapons on September

---

peril-must-be-immediately-lifted/.

67 News Wires, “Azerbaijan Closes Only Road Linking Breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh Region to Armenia,” France 24, July 11, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20230711-azerbaijan-closes-only-road-linking-breakaway-nagorno-karabakh-region-to-armenia>.

68 Tim Lister et al., “Azerbaijan Launches Operation against Armenian Forces in Nagorno-Karabakh,” CNN, September 20, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/09/19/asia/armenia-azerbaijan-nagorno-karabakh-bombardment-intl/index.html>.

69 “UN Karabakh Mission Told ‘sudden’ Exodus Means as Few as 50 Ethnic Armenians May Remain | UN News,” United Nations, accessed July 20, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1141782>.

70 “Russia Begins Withdrawing Peacekeeping Forces from Karabakh, Now under Full Azerbaijan Control,” AP News, April 23, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/russia-azerbaijan-withdrawal-f60ed4e9ca5e78c071b77a2fa57cd765>.

71 Tim Lister et al., “Azerbaijan Launches Operation against Armenian Forces in Nagorno-Karabakh,” CNN, September 20, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/09/19/asia/armenia-azerbaijan-nagorno-karabakh-bombardment-intl/index.html>.

72 Azerbaijan provides update on weapons, ammunition confiscated in garabagh, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://news.az/news/azerbaijan-provides-update-on-weapons-ammunition-confiscated-in-garabagh-1>.

73 Treaty of Turkmenchay (1828), accessed July 21, 2024, [https://mfa.gov.az/files/shares/Treaty of Turkmenchay.pdf](https://mfa.gov.az/files/shares/Treaty%20of%20Turkmenchay.pdf).

74 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “The Armenian Genocide (1915-16): In Depth,” accessed July 20, 2024, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-armenian-genocide-1915-16-in-depth>.



Azerbaijani refugees from Karabakh  
Credit: Ilgar Jafarov

28, 78,300 people had left the territory with more on the way.<sup>75</sup> The UN Mission, sent to Nagorno-Karabakh on October 1, 2024, found that only between 50 to 1,000 ethnic Armenians remained in the territory. The report also found no “destruction of agricultural infrastructure or dead animals from the road”.<sup>76</sup> over a week, the territory had become deserted. Many of these refugees sought help and aid from Armenia. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) documented 143,054 asylum seekers in Armenia from Azerbaijan during 2023.<sup>77</sup> Following the massive flow of refugees, around three to four percent of the population of Armenia are now considered refugees.<sup>78</sup>

The influx of refugees to Armenia has put a significant strain on Armenian infrastructure. Regional hotels and resorts struggled to house the large, sudden wave of people. The United Nations opened mental health clinics to assist the population of the war-torn region.<sup>79</sup> The World Health Organization (WHO)

additionally maintained a presence in Armenia directly supporting the refugees. Medical and humanitarian aid came in the form of assisting burn victims as a result of the attack to providing vaccinations to around 20,000 people in need of a measles, polio, or HPV vaccine. Additionally, the WHO assisted the Armenian government by providing 300 doctors and 1,200 nurses in healthcare centers. However, it’s not enough to assist many who are staying in more rural areas.<sup>80</sup>

Further assistance in the region was provided by the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), with hygiene kits provided to help families in need. In addition, the World Food Programme has provided 4,000 food packages totaling 16,000 meals to support Nagorno-Karabakh refugees in Armenia. The total aid, valued at USD 97 million, has the vast majority going towards medical services, shelter, and direct assistance to refugees.<sup>81</sup>

75 Avet Demourian and Gaiane Yenokian, “Over Half of Nagorno-Karabakh’s Population Flees as the Separatist Government Says It Will Dissolve,” AP News, September 28, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/nagorno-karabakh-azerbaijan-armenia-separatist-government-689e9e437f60a92eaca2523d57bc3d42>.

76 “UN Team Completes Mission to Karabakh in Azerbaijan,” United Nations, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://azerbaijan.un.org/en/248051-un-team-completes-mission-karabakh>.

77 “Refugee Data Finder,” UNHCR, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=QBtmr4>.

78 “Armenia Emergency Six-Month Impact Report (September 2023 - March 2024) - Armenia,” ReliefWeb, April 8, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/armenia/armenia-emergency-six-month-impact-report-september-2023-march-2024>.

79 UN Karabakh Mission told ‘sudden’ exodus means as few as 50 ethnic Armenians may remain | UN news, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1141782>.

80 “Who Armenia Refugee Health Response, 6 Months on, Critical Health Needs Continue,” World Health Organization, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://www.who.int/europe/news-room/spotlight/whos-armenia-refugee-health-response-6-months-on-critical-health-needs-continue>.

81 “Armenia Refugee Response Plan (October 2023 – March 2024) - Armenia,” ReliefWeb, October 7, 2023, <https://reliefweb.int/report/>

Another recent development has been the departure of the Russian peacekeeping force from the former Artsakh Republic. Following the First Nagorno-Karabakh War and as a condition of the ceasefire, Russia sent peacekeepers to the territory with a strong focus on the Lachin Corridor. With a force of nearly 2,000 peacekeepers, this mission focused on stabilizing the region, in addition to monitoring and assisting with any possible ceasefire violations. However, in April of 2024, Russia began removing peacekeepers from the former Nagorno-Karabakh. They had failed to protect the majority Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh in light of the Azerbaijan offensive, and the territory was dissolved. Despite their oversight, Azerbaijani forces overtook the territory, which was promptly demilitarized and later formally dissolved. With Nagorno-Karabakh now entirely under the control of Azerbaijan, and the vast majority of the population leaving for Armenia as refugees, the peacekeepers in the region have been withdrawn.<sup>82</sup>

### Case Study: The Russo-Ukrainian War

Ukraine is a country not dissimilar to either Armenia or [armenia/refugee-response-plan-october-2023-march-2024](https://www.armenia-refugee-response-plan-october-2023-march-2024).

<sup>82</sup> Al Jazeera, “Russian Peacekeepers Start Withdrawal from Nagorno-Karabakh,” Al Jazeera, April 17, 2024, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/4/17/russian-peacekeepers-start-withdrawal-from-azerbaijans-nagorno-karabakh>.

<sup>83</sup> Origins & history of Ukraine, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://ukraine.ua/explore/origins-history-of-ukraine/>.

<sup>84</sup> Olena Malynovska, “Caught between East and West, Ukraine Struggles with Its Migration Policy,” [migrationpolicy.org](https://www.migrationpolicy.org), September 21, 2021, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/caught-between-east-and-west-ukraine-struggles-its-migration-policy>.

Azerbaijan. It shares a location near Western Russia and to the north of the Black Sea. As a result, Ukraine shares a very similar history to both Armenia and Azerbaijan. Ukraine fell under the same fate as Azerbaijan and Armenia and was its own Soviet Republic under the USSR. A national identity soon began to form, with influences from its history, including Polish and Lithuanian roots. It was only in 1991 and the fall of the USSR that Ukraine finally gained independence.<sup>83</sup> In a similar pattern to Nagorno-Karabakh, poor economic conditions and political instability led to millions of ethnic Ukrainians leaving and emigrating to primarily Western countries. Between the 19th and 20th centuries, around 10 percent of the population left. In addition, during Russian Premier Joseph Stalin’s reign, millions of Ukrainians were relocated to Russia and Kazakhstan.<sup>84</sup>

The next 25 years immediately following independence from Russia were characterized by instability, corruption, and protests. The background of the political instability in modern Ukraine can be traced back to 2013. Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich was primed to sign a trade deal that would have integrated Ukraine closer with the European Union.

Rally in support of Ukraine  
Credit: Rhododendrites



Criticism towards Russia was already peaking, especially in the aftermath of the Soviet regime. However, Yanukovich declined to sign the deal, instead favoring a Russian trade deal.<sup>85</sup> This spawned the Euromaidan protests, starting in November 2013. These protests lasted into 2014 when the government began to attempt to suppress protests. Upon the January 16 law restricting protests, they began to turn violent, and on January 22 the first protestor was killed. By February 21, 2014, an estimated 100 civilians were killed.<sup>86</sup> These protests signaled a departure from the mostly Russian past in favor of more Western-focused sentiments and ideals.

Yanukovich fled Ukraine, and Russian President Vladimir Putin subsequently invaded and began occupation of the Crimean Peninsula. The justification given by Russia at the time was to commemorate the “300th anniversary of the reunion of Ukraine with Russia”.<sup>87</sup> This is referencing the Treaty of Pereyaslav and the Russian perspective that the treaty fully unified Ukraine and Russia. The territory is also historically ethnically Russian with nearly 1.5 million of the 2.2 million inhabitants identifying as ethnically Russian.<sup>88</sup> Putin claimed that there was “no legitimate authority” in Ukraine after Yanukovich fled from “nationalists, neo-Nazis, Russophobes and anti-Semites”. With this as justification, Putin held a referendum in Crimea, with 82 percent of the electorate voting with 96 percent in favor of rejoining Russia.<sup>89</sup> Following the annexation, the European Court of Human Rights decided that Russia was responsible for human rights violations in their annexation of Crimea, including abuse of ethnic Ukrainians and journalists.<sup>90</sup>

In addition, Putin supported separatists, and non-governmental forces, to engage in an armed conflict in the east of Ukraine.<sup>91</sup> This conflict in the Donbas region has resulted in around 14,400 deaths with 3,404 civilians, an estimated 4,400 Ukrainian soldiers, and an estimated 6,500 separatists killed.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, the conflict has led to a refugee crisis. As of July 25, 101,617 persons were designated as Internally Displaced People (IDPs) by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).<sup>93</sup> As of April 2020, that number increased to 1,446,881 according to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.<sup>94</sup>

Like Nagorno-Karabakh, the Donbas and Crimea have been in a state of constant conflict, torn between the recent West-driven policies of Ukraine and the occupation by Russia from the East. Another two stories of disputed territory, leading to displaced persons or refugees and a larger-scale conflict. While the current circumstances between the two countries are vastly different, there are a variety of similarities. Both Ukraine and the Nagorno-Karabakh region suffer from ethnically divided groups that have regions that are ethnically discontent with which country they are a part. These ethnic tensions have often led to violence with little to no room for negotiation. Historical land divisions and the Soviet Union’s purposeful management of ethnic boundaries have increased these ethnic tensions.

The recent escalation in the war in 2022 has only worsened the crisis. The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) issued a report in February 2024 that outlines civilian injuries and casualties, damage to

85 Andrey Kurkov, “Ukraine’s Revolution: Making Sense of a Year of Chaos,” BBC News, November 21, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30131108>.

86 “A 5-Minute Guide to Understanding Ukraine’s Euromaidan Protests,” Open Society Foundations, accessed June 13, 2024, <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/understanding-ukraines-euromaidan-protests>.

87 Conflict-related civilian casualties in Ukraine1, accessed August 14, 2024, [https://ukraine.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/Conflict-related civilian casualties as of 31 December 2021 \(rev 27 January 2022\) corr EN\\_0.pdf](https://ukraine.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/Conflict-related%20civilian%20casualties%20as%20of%2031%20December%202021%20(rev%2027%20January%202022)%20corr%20EN_0.pdf).

88 “Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?,” Wilson Center, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/why-did-russia-give-away-crimea-sixty-years-ago>.

89 “Crimea Crisis: Russian President Putin’s Speech Annotated,” BBC News, March 19, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26652058>.

90 “Top European Rights Court Says Russia Responsible for Breaching Rights in Crimea after 2014 Takeover,” AP News, June 25, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/ukraine-russia-crimea-rights-court-strasbourg-tatars-da75bca8b50d631fb59b102ed7a8c147>.

91 “Libguides: The War in Ukraine: Crimea and the Donbas,” Crimea and the Donbas - The War in Ukraine - LibGuides at University of Connecticut, accessed June 13, 2024, <https://guides.lib.uconn.edu/ukraine/crimea-donbas>.

92 United Nations in Ukraine, “Conflict-related civilian casualties in Ukraine”

93 Intense fighting in Eastern Ukraine “extremely alarming”, says Pillay, as UN releases New report | ohchr, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2014/07/intense-fighting-eastern-ukraine-extremely-alarming-says-pillay-un-releases>.

94 “National Monitoring System Report on the Situation of Internally Displaced Persons - March 2020 - Ukraine,” ReliefWeb, January 21, 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/national-monitoring-system-report-situation-internally-displaced-persons-march-2020>.



infrastructure and the environment. A total of 10,582 civilian deaths with an additional 19,875 injuries have been recorded.<sup>95</sup> Additionally, over four million civilians have been displaced as a result of the ongoing conflict.<sup>96</sup> Similar humanitarian issues still face the refugees of Nagorno-Karabakh, especially with the problem of finding places for them to resettle. The sheer destruction and number of displaced people go to show how deeply rooted these conflicts are in historical ethnic tensions. The case study of Ukraine shows that a simple political boundary shift is not the solution to ethnic conflicts like these. Instead, solutions would need to look deeper at the underlying causes of these conflicts in the first place. If proposed solutions do not address the underlying ethnic conflicts within these regions, then the cycle of violence and persecution will continue until one side can claim absolute victory.

## Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a list of goals and benchmarks for member-states to accomplish by 2030. The history of the Sustainable Development Goals begins at the Earth Summit, in Rio de Janeiro. The passage of Agenda 21 began the next 30 years of international cooperation growth and development. Agenda 21 led to the Millennium Summit where the Millennium Development Goals were passed, to eradicate poverty and extreme hunger, universal primary education, promote gender equality, combat infectious diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and ensure global partnership for development.<sup>97</sup> Following the 20th anniversary of the Earth Summit came the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).<sup>98</sup> This conference led to a framework for establishing post-2015 development goals, as the Millennium Development Goals were elapsing. Out of the UN Sustainable Development Conference in September 2015 came the current 17 Sustainable Development Goals. These are further built on the Millennium Goals and would

be facilitated by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). The SDGs contain 169 targets, with a total of 231 unique indicators.<sup>99</sup> These are used to track progress on the adoption of the 17 goals.

Sustainable Development Goal 16 focuses on “Promote[ing] peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide[ing] access to justice for all and build[ing] effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”. Between a total of 12 targets and 24 indicators, this goal seeks to establish stronger and more peaceful countries.<sup>100</sup> While Armenia and Azerbaijan have both made significant progress in a variety of other goals, none is more relevant to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh than goal 16. The establishment of safety and strength in a historically war-torn region is paramount.

Armenia has a total of USD 42.3 million available to be used for development towards the SDGs. Of this available funding, goal 16 has the most allocated in 2024. With an available fund of USD 6.7 million and 15.78 percent of the total reserves, Armenia is committed to working towards the goal. The United Nations has contributed USD 25.3 million, with the majority coming from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The largest contributors were the European Union, the Green Climate Fund, and Russia.<sup>101</sup> Azerbaijan has a total of USD 25.8 million available for allocation. Goal 16 is the 4th most contributed to in 2024, amounting to 11.81 percent of the total with a total available to the goal of USD 3 million. The United Nations is likewise contributing USD 15.7 million, with the majority coming from the UNDP. Of that, the European Union, Azerbaijan, and the United States of America have contributed the most.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Two-year update, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/two-year-update-protection-civilians-impact-hostilities-civilians-24.pdf>.

<sup>96</sup> “Ukraine,” Front page, August 12, 2024, <https://www.unocha.org/ukraine>.

<sup>97</sup> “United Nations Millennium Development Goals,” United Nations, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

<sup>98</sup> “United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20 :: Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform,” United Nations, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/rio20>.

<sup>99</sup> “SDG Indicators - SDG Indicators,” United Nations, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>.

<sup>100</sup> “The 17 Goals | Sustainable Development,” United Nations, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

<sup>101</sup> “Sustainable Development Goals in Armenia,” United Nations, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://armenia.un.org/en/sdgs>.

<sup>102</sup> “Sustainable Development Goals in Azerbaijan,” United Nations, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://azerbaijan.un.org/en/sdgs>.

## Bloc Analysis

### Points of Division

When looking at the different sides of this conflict, it is important to note that no country has recognized Nagorno-Karabakh as independent or fully sovereign. Some independent municipalities and states had acknowledged Nagorno-Karabakh as independent and sovereign before the 2023 offensive. However, there was never widespread international recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh's independence. Instead of discussing the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh, the international discussion has focused on who maintained control of the region. On one hand, some countries supported Armenia in its goal for the semi-autonomous Artsakh Republic. Other countries have claimed that the territory falls within Azerbaijan's control. Notably, Armenia announced that they would be prepared to acknowledge the territory as Azerbaijani under one condition: peace and security would be ensured for all Karabakh citizens.<sup>103</sup> Recognition and independence continued to be an intensely debated topic in the territory until Nagorno-Karabakh was taken over by Azerbaijani forces.

Another point of division is the recognition of the Armenian Genocide as the starting point for ethnic and religious conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. The Armenian Genocide was committed during World War I and saw the mass murder of Armenians throughout the Ottoman Empire.<sup>104</sup> This has resulted in discontent from Armenians, especially as Türkiye has allied themselves with Azerbaijan. Many other countries have remained hesitant to officially declare the mass killings of Armenians as a genocide. This is primarily because of political reasons with many countries being cautious of angering Türkiye. As it relates to the Nagorno-Karabakh

conflict, countries that have continued to support Armenia are continuing to feel pressure to recognize an Armenian Genocide since it would present a stronger case for Armenia to claim that Nagorno-Karabakh was historically Armenia.

### Azerbaijani-supporting countries

The Azerbaijani-supporting bloc includes countries that militarily or strategically assisted Azerbaijan in their offensive operations to retake Nagorno-Karabakh. However, no alliance is as strong as Azerbaijan's partnership with Türkiye. Located on the opposite side of Armenia from Azerbaijan, the relationship is close, both geographically and politically. Türkiye was the first country to officially recognize Azerbaijan in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union on November 9, 1991, and established a long-lasting diplomatic partnership on January 14, 1992.<sup>105</sup> Since then, Türkiye has been assisting Azerbaijan with modern weapons, equipment, and ammunition.<sup>106</sup> In addition, drone warfare has been a significant development and was critical in the second Nagorno-Karabakh War and offensive on the Artsakh Republic in September 2023. Azerbaijan leveraged their drones, bought from Türkiye and Israel, with one expert saying, "clearly, the decisive factor in this conflict is Türkiye's intervention on Azerbaijan's side. They seem to be heavily coordinating the war effort".<sup>107</sup> Another contributor to this drone warfare is Israel, who supplied arms worth an estimated USD 140 million in 2017 alone.<sup>108</sup> Azerbaijan also bought a USD 1.6 billion weapons package from Israel in 2012, including drones, anti-aircraft systems, and missile defense systems.<sup>109</sup> More recently, in 2023, Azerbaijan bought the Barak MX missile defense system from Israel Aerospace Industries for USD 1.2 billion.

Beyond Israel and Türkiye, Azerbaijan has found itself benefiting from a partnership with the North Atlantic Treaty

<sup>103</sup> Rfe/rl, "Pashinian Says Armenia Is Ready to Recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as Part of Azerbaijan under Certain Conditions," RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, May 22, 2023, <https://www.rferl.org/a/armenia-pashinian-recognize-karabakh-azerbaijani-territory/32422965.html>.

<sup>104</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "The Armenian Genocide (1915-16): In Depth,"

<sup>105</sup> Relations between Türkiye and Azerbaijan / republic of türkiye ministry of foreign affairs, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkiye-and-azerbaijan.en.mfa>.

<sup>106</sup> "Azerbaijan to Boost Defense Production with Turkish Collaboration, Defense Minister Says," Anadolu Ajansı, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/azerbaijan-to-boost-defense-production-with-turkish-collaboration-defense-minister-says/3259217>.

<sup>107</sup> In Nagorno-Karabakh, drones gave Azerbaijan huge advantage and showed future of warfare - The Washington Post, accessed August 14, 2024, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/nagorno-karabakh-drones-azerbaijan-aremenia/2020/11/11/441bcbd2-193d-11eb-8bda-814ca56e138b\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/nagorno-karabakh-drones-azerbaijan-aremenia/2020/11/11/441bcbd2-193d-11eb-8bda-814ca56e138b_story.html).

<sup>108</sup> Newsam, "Azerbaijan Buys Israeli Weapons, but Is Very Cautious," RSS, March 29, 2019, <https://news.am/eng/news/504144.html>.

<sup>109</sup> "Azerbaijan Makes Massive Israeli Weapons Purchase -- but Not Because of Iran," Eurasianet, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://eurasianet.org/azerbaijan-makes-massive-israeli-weapons-purchase-but-not-because-of-iran>.

Organization (NATO). Azerbaijan has participated in the Partnerships for Peace Planning and Review Process, which has “allowed NATO and individual Allies to assist Azerbaijan in developing selected units to improve interoperability with those of the Allies.”<sup>110</sup> In addition to that, Azerbaijan is a founding member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), along with Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. The CSTO was formed as a security and defense organization, in a similar way to NATO.<sup>111</sup>

While the United States has historically been supportive of Azerbaijan and military ventures, a bill passed by the US Government prohibited future aid. After the sudden 2023 Azerbaijan offensive that dissolved Nagorno-Karabakh, the United States declined to waive Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, passed in 1992 in light of the First Nagorno-Karabakh War.<sup>112</sup> This section was waived to allow Azerbaijan to engage in anti-terrorism initiatives, but as a result of the second Nagorno-Karabakh war and breaking the conditions of the section, all funding was pulled.<sup>113</sup>

Countries in this bloc also include Algeria, Pakistan, the People’s Republic of China, and Somalia. Additionally, states within this bloc tend to align with Turkish and Russian interests and seek to support the Azerbaijan takeover of the now-defunct Nagorno-Karabakh territory.

## Armenian-supporting Countries

The Armenia-supporting bloc includes countries that assisted Armenia militarily in their defense of Nagorno-Karabakh. These countries provide anything ranging from financial aid

to staff and personnel training. Like Azerbaijan, Armenia has close relations with both NATO and the CSTO. Identical to Azerbaijan, Armenia is a party to the PfP Planning and Review Process, to modernize and develop Armenian forces. Additionally, Armenia’s cooperation is outlined by an Individual Partnership Action Plan. This means that Armenia closely collaborates with NATO on fulfilling many different military, economic, and political goals set by the alliance.<sup>114</sup> Some of these include creating strong democratic institutions and opening up more trade to the world. In addition to the contributions made by NATO, Armenia also has participated in international peacekeeping missions, such as the 2004 operation in Kosovo, the 2010 International Security Assistance Force Mission in Afghanistan, and the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan in 2015.<sup>115</sup>

Within CSTO, Armenia has long participated in training and operations. However, the CSTO partnership has failed Armenia. Inaction about Armenia and Azerbaijan border tensions has led to animosity towards the CSTO partnership in Armenia.<sup>116</sup> This animosity reached a peak in June 2024, when the Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan stated that Armenia was planning on leaving, with no date set.<sup>117</sup>

Historically, one of Armenia’s greatest supporters has been Russia. Russia has stationed missile defense systems in Armenia and signed arms export deals.<sup>118</sup> Additionally, a new agreement sees a commitment to Russian military presence in Armenia until 2044, along with supplying modern weaponry.<sup>119</sup> However, with Armenian support for the CSTO fading and assistance from NATO only growing, new alliances have formed with the United States and the European Union. In April 2024, the European Union provided Euro 270

110 NATO, “Relations with Azerbaijan,” NATO, June 19, 2024, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_49111.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49111.htm).

111 “The CSTO: A Lifeless, Shambling ‘Alliance’: Gjia,” Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, March 14, 2024, <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2024/03/04/the-collective-security-treaty-organization-a-lifeless-shambling-alliance/>.

112 Alex Little et al., “Ending US Military Assistance to Azerbaijan Immediately,” Responsible Statecraft, November 7, 2023, <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/armenia-azerbaijan/>.

113 U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Foreign Assistance: Agencies Should Take Steps to Improve Reporting on Assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan,” Foreign Assistance: Agencies Should Take Steps to Improve Reporting on Assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan | U.S. GAO, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-22-104619>.

114 NATO, “Relations with Armenia,” NATO, May 21, 2024, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_48893.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_48893.htm).

115 “North Atlantic Treaty Organization,” Հայաստանի Հանրապետության արտաքին գործերի նախարարություն, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://www.mfa.am/en/international-organisations/3>.

116 Ani Avetisyan, “Apparent Inaction Gives Rise to Criticism of Csto in Armenia,” OC Media, July 9, 2021, <https://oc-media.org/apparent-inaction-gives-rise-to-criticism-of-csto-in-armenia/>.

117 Avet Demourian, “Armenian Leader Announces Plan to Leave Russia-Dominated Security Alliance as Ties with Moscow Sour,” AP News, June 13, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/armenia-russia-csto-security-alliance-2968d29f8fe97a1be8d1a952a1d2ebb8>.

118 Advanced Russian Missiles ‘Deployed In Armenia,’ June 3, 2013, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/25005647.html>.

119 Advanced Russian Missiles ‘Deployed In Armenia,’

million (USD 291 million), with the United States adding USD 65 million for assistance after the Armenian defeat in the second Nagorno-Karabakh War.<sup>120</sup> Further solidifying this relationship are recent calls from Armenian and European officials for Armenia to join the European Union. A recent vote from the European Parliament on March 13, 2024, was overwhelmingly in favor of “the option to explore the potential of granting Armenia the status of a candidate for EU membership.”<sup>121</sup> Though non-binding, this sets the foundation for a path to join the European Union.

Additionally, recently the United States has also shown greater support for Armenia in light of the recent conflicts. In addition to the USD 65 million in the US-EU joint assistance package, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has committed USD 33 million towards the support of displaced persons and rebuilding after the war.<sup>122</sup> Other countries in the Armenian-supporting bloc include Denmark, France, Greece, and Sierra Leone. States in this bloc are likely to align with NATO or European Union policies and seek to help Armenia rebuild and prosper in the aftermath of the most recent war.

### Non-aligned Countries

Non-aligned Countries are likely to have neutral or no relations with either Armenia or Azerbaijan. Most countries within this bloc want to see a demilitarized resolution to the conflict with the general goal being a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Generally, countries within this bloc want to minimize foreign intervention in the region and would ideally like to see both sides of the conflict resolve the issues themselves. As a result, this bloc would likely oppose any form of peacekeeping intervention or have a foreign power lead the negotiations between both sides. Instead, an UN-led negotiation along with UN-led demilitarization efforts would allow this conflict to be resolved in the most neutral way possible. Outside collaboration and assistance from organizations such as the

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) would also be welcome.

The United Kingdom, Malta, and the United Arab Emirates have all voiced similar beliefs during Meeting 9422 of the Security Council on September 21, 2023. These countries generally want to see the conflict end with as little outside involvement as possible. While all countries spoke in favor of a greater humanitarian response, these three were vocal in support of normalization in relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. However, this does not mean that countries within this bloc are strictly non-aligned. Countries within this bloc could sway in either direction in favor of Azerbaijan or Armenia. However, they should consider themselves as advocates for a more hands-off approach to the conflict and propose ways for the Security Council to remain impartial in its resolutions. Other countries in this bloc include Guyana, Panama, and the Republic of Korea.

### Committee Mission

The United Nations Security Council is a unique body within the United Nations system. As one of the principal organs of the UN, the UNSC is the only body that can pass resolutions that are legally binding for all member states. This means that member states participating in the UNSC have the special responsibility and power to draft resolutions that a majority of the international community must abide by. The power of the Security Council provides member states additional flexibility to propose new and unique solutions that a traditional UN committee would not have the authority to enforce.

As a committee, delegates will be given the ability to negotiate resolutions that have a direct impact on what happens on the ground in conflict zones. Unlike many UN committees, the Security Council will play an important role in deciding between starting new aid campaigns to ordering the beginning of a new peacekeeping mission within a region. These solutions

<sup>120</sup> “European Union, United States Woo Armenia with Economic Assistance Package,” Eurasianet, accessed August 14, 2024, <https://eurasianet.org/european-union-united-states-woo-armenia-with-economic-assistance-package>.

<sup>121</sup> “European Commission Official Affirms Armenia’s Right to Seek EU Membership,” Caucasus Watch, August 13, 2024, <https://caucasuswatch.de/en/news/european-commission-official-affirms-armenias-right-to-seek-eu-membership.html>.

<sup>122</sup> “U.S. Enhances Support for Armenia at the U.S.-EU High-Level Meeting: Press Release: Europe and Eurasia,” U.S. Agency for International Development, April 22, 2024, <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/apr-05-2024-us-enhances-support-armenia-us-eu-high-level-meeting>.

and proposals will be able to have direct consequences for those on the ground. As a result, delegates should think about solutions that can make a direct impact on civilians and soldiers alike while promoting the safety and well-being of all.

The situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh region has reached a critical level. As human rights continue to be abused and civilians continue to be relocated, the constant fighting has increased the risk of spilling over into a much larger crisis. The world has already seen numerous times how conflicts that are ignored by the international community can become much larger global crises. As the Security Council, delegates will be tasked with the mission of upholding the fundamental values of the UN Charter and the Security Council's purpose.

However, this conflict will not be easily resolved. From ethnic tensions to the beginnings of a humanitarian crisis, the Nagorno-Karabakh region will need many different solutions to address these issues. Competing interests also dominate the region, with the Russian Federation continuing to be a major power in the region while the members of NATO and other regional countries try to counter Russia's role. Only through collaboration and cooperation can the Security Council meet its original intended mission of international security and peace.



UNSC-B

NHSMUN 2025

No to  
**Taliban**

NO TO SHARIA  
**NO TO THE TALIBAN!**

**WOMEN SAY  
NO TO SHARIA**



**TOPIC B:  
THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN**

Photo Credit: Ostendfaxpost

## Introduction

Throughout Afghanistan's history, it has been a region influenced by foreign powers. The country has never been colonized but it has experienced foreign influence from colonial powers. In 1893, with the influence of the British government, British India (now India and Pakistan) and Afghanistan created the Durand Line, establishing a formal border between the two countries. The border was established based on natural features and resources. Many ethnic groups became separated by the Durand Line.<sup>1</sup> As a result, fighting along the border began, with groups along the border wanting to reunite. To this day, fighting continues and intensifies with the addition of new technology and offensive techniques.<sup>2</sup>

Afghanistan has been the site of many proxy wars dating back to the Cold War. A proxy war is a conflict between two powers that represent the interests of other larger powers without direct involvement. After the Afghan-Soviet War that allowed the USSR to take over Afghanistan, a communist government was established to rule the country. When the Soviets withdrew, a Civil War between the Soviet-backed communist government and an opposition insurgent group followed.<sup>3</sup> During the Civil War, Saudi-born Osama Bin Laden created al-Qaeda, a group focused on taking over Afghanistan from its communist government and implementing extremist Islamic ideals in its place.<sup>4</sup>

From there, Afghanistan became the home for many terrorist groups and witnessed the growth of extremist groups such as al-Qaeda. In 2001, al-Qaeda carried out a series of attacks against the United States (US), killing 2,996 people.<sup>5</sup> In response, the United States launched "Operation Enduring Freedom," which was aimed at taking down extremist groups and organizations in Afghanistan. With the help of its allies, the

US took over Afghanistan and helped form a new democratic government while establishing several counterterrorism measures in the region.<sup>6</sup>

In 2021, by order of US President Joseph Biden, US and allied troops withdrew from Afghanistan after being present in the region for 20 years.<sup>7</sup> The withdrawal gave way for the Taliban to take over Afghanistan, proclaiming themselves as the new Afghan government.<sup>8</sup> Since the ascension of the Taliban, there have been significant changes to the country and region.

Afghanistan has become secluded from the rest of the world on the international stage. With many countries not willing to recognize the Taliban as Afghanistan's official government, international aid, and trade have been cut off significantly.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, increased discriminatory policies by the Taliban on women have encouraged a significant withdrawal of NGOs and other humanitarian organizations from the region.<sup>10</sup> A previously stable relationship with Pakistan has turned hostile, causing a surge in cross-border attacks and deaths of civilians on both sides.<sup>11</sup> Internal issues in Afghanistan have caused an

1 Vinay Kaura, "The Durand Line: A British Legacy Plaguering Afghan-Pakistani Relations," Middle East Institute, 2018, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/durand-line-british-legacy-plaguering-afghan-pakistani-relations>.

2 Sanjay Pulipaka, "Durand Line: Old Contestations and New Conflicts," Asia Times (Asia Times, October 15, 2023), <https://asiatimes.com/2023/10/durand-line-old-contestations-and-new-conflicts/>.

3 Encyclopædia Britannica, "Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan," in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, October 17, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion-of-Afghanistan>.

4 Congressional Research Service, "Al Qaeda: Background, Current Status, and U.S. Policy," May 6, 2024, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11854>.

5 Antony Blinken, "22nd Anniversary of the September 11, 2001 Attacks," United States Department of State, September 11, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/22nd-anniversary-of-the-september-11-2001-attacks>.

6 Naval History and Heritage Command, "Operation Enduring Freedom," Navy.mil, 2019, <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/wars-conflicts-and-operations/middle-east/operation-enduring-freedom.html>.

7 United States White House, "U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan," 2023, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/US-Withdrawal-from-Afghanistan.pdf>.

8 Lindsay Maizland, "The Taliban in Afghanistan," Council on Foreign Relations (Council on Foreign Relations, January 19, 2023), <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/taliban-afghanistan>.

9 William Byrd, "Wrestling with a Humanitarian Dilemma in Afghanistan," United States Institute of Peace, January 26, 2023, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/01/wrestling-humanitarian-dilemma-afghanistan>.

10 International Crisis Group, "Taliban Restrictions on Women's Rights Deepen Afghanistan's Crisis," [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org), February 23, 2023, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/329-taliban-restrictions-womens-rights-deepen-afghanistans-crisis>.

11 Makhdum Karam Shah, "Calming the Neighborhood: Pakistan's Immediate Security Challenges Post-Election | Wilson Center," [www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org), March 28, 2024, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/calming-neighborhood-pakistans-immediate-security-challenges-post-election>.

influx of Afghan migrants into Pakistan, which Pakistan has been struggling to handle, further testing its relationship with Afghanistan.<sup>12</sup>

Afghanistan's economy has deteriorated due to the lack of trade and sanctions on Taliban officials.<sup>13</sup> The economic crisis has translated into a humanitarian crisis. As of 2023, 14.39 percent of Afghans are unemployed, with 34 million people living under the poverty line.<sup>14</sup> This has caused a severe lack of access to basic needs such as food and clean water. It is estimated that about half of Afghans face severe hunger every year.<sup>15</sup> As a landlocked country, Afghanistan continues to face a lack of clean water, which is exacerbated by severe floods and droughts caused by climate change.<sup>16</sup> The humanitarian crisis has caused severe displacement of people and, in turn, caused a refugee crisis in countries surrounding Afghanistan, including Pakistan.<sup>17</sup> This displacement is also the cause of fear. Many Afghans who are of a religious minority, LGBTIQ+, or women, live in fear with an increase in targeted Taliban policies.<sup>18</sup> Fully understanding the country's deep history and various issues today is essential to creating impactful and lasting change in Afghanistan.

## History and Description of the Issue

### Imperialism and Interstate Conflicts

While trying to find the true roots and origins of Afghanistan, many scholars have begun to call Afghanistan a “quasi colony,” meaning that, though never colonized, Afghanistan was largely under the influence of foreign powers, making its ability to become an independent country almost impossible.<sup>19</sup> Alongside such, Afghanistan was not formally recognized as a country in its earlier days, only having foreign powers recognize it beginning in the 1920s.<sup>20</sup> The lack of recognition for Afghanistan made it easier for these powers to become involved in its internal affairs.<sup>21</sup> A prime example of foreign state involvement in the region was the creation of the Durand Line in 1893. The Durand Line is acknowledged as the first official agreement that recognized the border between Afghanistan and its then neighbor, British India—now known as Pakistan.<sup>22</sup> During that time, Colonial India was a colony of the British and therefore under British control. The establishment of a formal border would solve many of their disputes. For example, because Britain feared a Russian invasion from the north and west, the Durand Line would create a ‘buffer state’ between the British colony and growing Russian interest in the region.<sup>23</sup> The Durand Line would also help the colony decrease its growing tribal sentiments by

12 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “Islamic Republic of Pakistan,” Global Focus, 2024, <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/operations/islamic-republic-pakistan>.

13 Hameed Hakimi and Gareth Price, “Afghanistan: One Year of Taliban Rule,” Chatham House – International Affairs Think Tank, August 15, 2022, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/08/afghanistan-one-year-taliban-rule>.

14 Statista, “Afghanistan - Unemployment Rate 2009-2019,” Statista, June 2024, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/808214/unemployment-rate-in-afghanistan/>; Agence France Presse, “UN Says 34 Million Afghans in Poverty under Taliban Rule,” [www.barrons.com](https://www.barrons.com), April 2023, <https://www.barrons.com/news/34-million-afghans-in-poverty-under-taliban-rule-un-1abfa801>.

15 Stefanie Glinski, “‘Countdown to Catastrophe’: Half of Afghans Face Hunger This Winter – UN,” the Guardian, October 25, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/oct/25/countdown-to-catastrophe-half-of-afghans-face-hunger-this-winter-un>.

16 Sameera Noori, “Climate Change, Conflict and Displacement: Perspectives from Afghanistan | Humanitarian Practice Network,” Humanitarian Practice Network, March 13, 2024, <https://odihpn.org/publication/climate-change-conflict-and-displacement-perspectives-from-afghanistan>.

17 Abid Hussain, “‘What’s Wrong?’: The Silence of Pakistanis on Expulsion of Afghan Refugees,” Al Jazeera, November 22, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/22/whats-wrong-the-silence-of-pakistanis-on-expulsion-of-afghan-refugees>.

18 Amnesty International, “Human Rights in Afghanistan,” Amnesty International, n.d., <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/asia-and-the-pacific/south-asia/afghanistan/report-afghanistan>.

19 Nivi Manchanda, *Imagining Afghanistan the History and Politics of Imperial Knowledge* (Cambridge, United Kingdom New York, Ny Port Melbourne, Vic New Delhi Singapore Cambridge University Press, 2020).

20 United States Office of the Historian, “Afghanistan - Countries - Office of the Historian,” [history.state.gov](https://history.state.gov), n.d., <https://history.state.gov/countries/afghanistan>.

21 James Crawford, “The Criteria for Statehood: Statehood as Effectiveness,” in *The Creation of States in International Law* (Oxford Academic, 2007).

22 Mary Schons, “The Durand Line | National Geographic Society,” [education.nationalgeographic.org](https://education.nationalgeographic.org), January 9, 2024, <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/durand-line/>.

23 Bharat Vissamsetti, Mark Payne, and Stephen Payne, “Inadvertent Prescription of Gelatin-Containing Oral Medication: Its Acceptability to Patients,” *Postgraduate Medical Journal* 88, no. 1043 (February 28, 2012): 499–502, <https://doi.org/10.1136/postgradmedj-2011-130306>.



dividing the tribes between British India and Afghanistan.<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, there is a popular belief amongst historians that Afghanistan relied heavily on its economic relationship with Britain.<sup>25</sup> Because of this, it is believed that when the then Emir, or ruler, of Afghanistan, Abdur Rahman, refused to sign the agreement, the British threatened to put an economic embargo on the country. An economic embargo—a restriction on trade between two or more countries—would have devastated the Afghan economy. Therefore, it is believed that the terms of the border agreement were accepted due to this threat.<sup>26</sup>

Nonetheless, the agreement did not guarantee peace between the two states. For nearly a century and a half, the contention on the border has caused a series of attacks and conflicts that have severely impacted both populations. Even after gaining independence from the British and its separation from India in 1947, Pakistan has continued its assertion of areas along the border; which directly counter Afghan territorial claims.<sup>27</sup>

In September of 1960, Afghanistan's prime minister, Mohammad Daoud Khan, deployed the Royal Afghan Army to the Bajaur District—a formally recognized tribal region in Pakistan made up of the Pashtun, an indigenous tribe separated by the Durand Line. Pakistan responded with a series of airstrikes that stopped further Afghan advancements in the district. The conflict, now known as the Bajaur Campaign, caused a huge strain on Afghanistan-Pakistan relations. Trade relations between both countries were halted for a year and a half, causing a major blow to the Afghan economy, and resulting in a greater dependence of Afghanistan on the USSR for military and common goods.<sup>28</sup>

This was not the first event of foreign interference in 20th-century Afghanistan. During the Bajaur conflict, there was speculation that Afghanistan was backed by the USSR and Pakistan by the United States. Both countries were rumored to have provided intelligence and weaponry to Afghanistan and Pakistan.<sup>29</sup>

After the end of the Bajaur Campaign in 1961, Prime Minister Mohammad Daoud Khan was forced to resign from his post. Twelve years later, in an attempt to overthrow his cousin, King Mohammed Zahir Shah, the ruler of Afghanistan at the time, Khan carried out a coup d'état—an overthrow of the monarchical government of Afghanistan. Khan was successful and, as a result, created Afghanistan's first republican government system.<sup>30</sup>

In 1978, Khan's government was taken over by Nur Mohammad Taraki and his left-wing military party.<sup>31</sup> Soon, Taraki's supporters formed the People's Democratic Party, which focused on promoting leftist-communist ideals. Naturally, the party formed a close relationship with the Soviet Union based on their shared ideology.<sup>32</sup> Though the party received support from the Soviets, it failed to gain much traction in Afghanistan, having only a small number of Afghan supporters. As an opposition to the People's Democratic Party, the insurgent group known as the Mujahideen was formed to promote the ideals of Islam.

The Mujahideen carried out various uprisings, protests, and fighting, causing much internal strife.<sup>33</sup> Because of the unsteady nature forming inside the country, the USSR decided to invade Afghanistan in December of 1979. The Soviet's main goal with this operation was to reform the Afghan government

24 European Foundation for South Asian Studies, "The Durand Line - a Razor's Edge between Afghanistan & Pakistan," [www.efsas.org](http://www.efsas.org), accessed July 13, 2024, <https://www.efsas.org/publications/study-papers/the-durand-line-a-razors-edge-between-afghanistan-and-pakistan/>.

25 Amanda Lanzillo, "Empire and Dependence in Afghan History," *Jamhoor*, January 27, 2022, <https://www.jamhoor.org/read/empire-and-dependence-in-afghan-history>.

26 Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Tara Vassefi, "The Forgotten History of Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations," *Yale Journal of International Affairs*, February 22, 2012, <https://www.yalejournal.org/publications/the-forgotten-history-of-afghanistan-pakistan-relations>.

27 Times of India, "The Durand Line: A 128-Year-Old-Thorn in Afghanistan-Pakistan Ties," *The Times of India*, January 17, 2022, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/the-durand-line-a-128-year-old-thorn-in-af-pak-ties/articleshow/88955917.cms>.

28 Khaama Press, "Mohammad Daud Khan," *The Khaama Press News Agency*, February 15, 2010, <https://www.khaama.com/mohammad-daud-khan/>.

29 Keesing's Record of World Events, "'Pakhtoonistan' Dispute. - Military Operations in Frontier Areas. - Pakistani Allegations of Afghan Incursions.," 1958.

30 Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Mohammad Daud Khan | Prime Minister of Afghanistan | Britannica," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mohammad-Daud-Khan>.

31 Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, October 17, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion-of-Afghanistan>.

32 J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation*, *Internet Archive*, 1994, [https://archive.org/details/bub\\_gb\\_RUSNyMH1aFQC](https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_RUSNyMH1aFQC).

33 Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Mujahideen | Afghani Rebels | Britannica," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mujahideen-Afghani-rebels>.



Osama bin Laden sits with his adviser Ayman al-Zawahiri

Credit: Hamid Mir

to comply with their ideology. The Soviets promoted Babrak Karmal to become the new leader of the country.<sup>34</sup> Karmal has been seen as a “puppet” ruler, meaning though he was officially the leader of Afghanistan, most decisions were made by the Soviets to promote Soviet interests.<sup>35</sup> Karmal was faced with extremely poor public popularity. On the other hand, the Mujahideen continued to grow with the help of the United States.<sup>36</sup>

This conflict has become known as the Soviet-Afghan War.<sup>37</sup> It is also often recognized as another example of the proxy wars that occurred during the Cold War between the Soviets and the United States.<sup>38</sup> Proxy wars, or conflicts where two parties are being supported or influenced by third-party participants, are often extremely harmful to developing countries.<sup>39</sup> It is important to recognize the conditions that allowed for Afghanistan to become an actor for a proxy war, and how the impacts of those wars have continued to heavily impact the

country’s economic and political status today.

## Rise of Terrorism and Extremism

The effects of the continued, and often imposed, conflicts in Afghanistan have been present in the country for decades since. After the Soviet military withdrawal and the fall of the USSR in 1991, Afghanistan’s pro-communist government fell. Taking advantage of a weakened government, the Mujahideen attacked pro-communist forces. While Mujahideen leaders took large possession of the Afghan government, they were never recognized as official government members.

The internal conflict in Afghanistan due to Soviet withdrawal was labeled as a civil war.<sup>40</sup> During this fight for control over Afghanistan, Saudi-born Osama bin Laden created al-Qaeda, meaning “the Base,” to carry out a series of attacks to assert control over the region and make it reflect Islamic

34 Tsira Shvangiradze, “1979 Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: The Beginning of the USSR’s End,” TheCollector, October 29, 2023, <https://www.thecollector.com/soviet-ussr-invasion-afghanistan/>.

35 History Channel, “Soviets Take over in Afghanistan,” HISTORY, November 13, 2009, <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/soviets-take-over-in-afghanistan>.

36 Tsira Shvangiradze, “1979 Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: The Beginning of the USSR’s End,” TheCollector, October 29, 2023, <https://www.thecollector.com/soviet-ussr-invasion-afghanistan/>.

37 United States Office of the Historian, “The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S. Response, 1978–1980,” State.gov, n.d., <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1977-1980/soviet-invasion-afghanistan>.

38 Thomas Hegghammer, *The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters*, vol. 35 (Harvard College: International Security, 2010), 53–94, [https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/files/The\\_Rise\\_of\\_Muslim\\_Foreign\\_Fighters.pdf](https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/files/The_Rise_of_Muslim_Foreign_Fighters.pdf).

39 Nour Ghantous, “Proxy Wars, Explained,” FairPlanet, December 8, 2023, <https://www.fairplanet.org/story/what-are-proxy-wars-and-where-are-they-happening/>.

40 Hannah Bloch, “A Look at Afghanistan’s 40 Years of Crisis — from the Soviet War to Taliban Recapture,” NPR.org (National Public Radio, August 19, 2021), <https://www.npr.org/2021/08/19/1028472005/afghanistan-conflict-timeline>.

ideals.<sup>41</sup> Al-Qaeda grew rapidly, constantly merging with Islamic organizations with similar goals and carrying out mass recruitment.<sup>42</sup> Terrorist and violent attacks against Western powers grew in intensity and frequency, with many al-Qaeda leaders referring to these acts as a “holy war” against the Western world.<sup>43</sup>

The Soviet-Afghan War was a result of the creation of strong and well-organized insurgent groups that continued to grow around the country. It was also the breeding ground for passionate resistance groups. Eventually, members of the Mujahideen began splitting off into smaller groups or factions. One of the most prominent of those factions was The Taliban, an “ultra-conservative” group made up of Afghan students and religious seminaries.<sup>44</sup> The Taliban forcefully took the city of Kandahar into their possession in 1994. In the city, they established laws based on their strict interpretation of Islamic values. They continued to capture various cities in the Southern region of Afghanistan, including those near the border with Pakistan, often controlled by warlords.

In May of 1996, al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden sought refuge in Afghanistan. Bin Laden soon joined the Mujahideen forces in combating the Soviets and established himself as the leader of the Taliban. Under his leadership, the Taliban took control of the city of Kabul, located in eastern Afghanistan, in September 1996. Throughout the couple of years that followed, the Taliban continued to expand their control across Afghanistan.<sup>45</sup> By 1998, only three countries had properly recognized the Taliban as Afghanistan’s formal government—Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

From 1998 to 2001, the Taliban carried out a series of international terrorist attacks, claiming that the growth of Western culture opposed their Islamic beliefs. Despite continued calls from the international community, economic sanctions by the UN Security Council, and low popular support, the Taliban continued their violent activities.

On September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda carried out several attacks in the United States, including in New York, Washington DC, and Pennsylvania. These attacks caused the deaths of 2,996 people, the most deadly attack on United States soil.<sup>46</sup> The 9/11 attacks were quickly traced back to Bin Laden. When the Taliban was asked to hand their leader over to the United States, the Taliban strongly refused.<sup>47</sup> In response, the United States established Operation Enduring Freedom, focused on eliminating the Taliban and al-Qaeda-centered regions, including Afghanistan.<sup>48</sup>

### United States Operation Enduring Freedom

On October 7, 2001, the United States launched Operation Enduring Freedom as a response to the 9/11 attacks from the same year.<sup>49</sup> The United States’ focus was to defend its citizens and national security by eradicating al-Qaeda and the Taliban’s joint terrorist network based in Afghanistan. The United States Government claimed Afghanistan gave al-Qaeda a “safe haven,” and therefore, a military occupation of the region was necessary to find Bin Laden and dismantle his organizations.<sup>50</sup>

Since 1949, the United States has been a part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a military alliance

41 Federal Bureau of Investigation, “Osama Bin Laden,” Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI, n.d.), <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/osama-bin-laden>.

42 Public Broadcasting Service, “Al Qaeda - Background - al Qaeda | inside the Terror Network | FRONTLINE | PBS,” [www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/network/alqaeda/indictment.html), n.d., <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/network/alqaeda/indictment.html>.

43 Encyclopedia Britannica, “Al-Qaeda | History, Meaning, Terrorist Attacks, & Facts,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/al-Qaeda>.

44 Al Jazeera, “The History of the Taliban,” [www.aljazeera.com](http://www.aljazeera.com), August 18, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/8/18/the-history-of-the-taliban>.

45 Hannah Bloch, “A Look at Afghanistan’s 40 Years of Crisis — from the Soviet War to Taliban Recapture,” NPR.org (National Public Radio, August 19, 2021), <https://www.npr.org/2021/08/19/1028472005/afghanistan-conflict-timeline>.

46 Antony Blinken, “22nd Anniversary of the September 11, 2001 Attacks,” United States Department of State, September 11, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/22nd-anniversary-of-the-september-11-2001-attacks/>.

47 The National Security Archive, “Taliban File Update,” [nsarchive2.gwu.edu](http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu), March 19, 2004, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB97/index3.htm>.

48 Tommy R. Franks and Donald H. Romsfeld, “Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services - United States Senate,” <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-107shrg83471/html/CHRG-107shrg83471.htm>.

49 Naval History and Heritage Command, “Operation Enduring Freedom,” Naval History and Heritage Command, 2024, <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/wars-conflicts-and-operations/middle-east/operation-enduring-freedom.html>.

50 Lloyd Austin, “Message to the Force - One Year since the Conclusion of the Afghanistan War,” U.S. Department of Defense, August 30, 2022, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3144082/message-to-the-force-one-year-since-the-conclusion-of-the-afghanistan-war/>.

between some of the world's most militarily-equipped countries including France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and more.<sup>51</sup> NATO is unique not only because of its members but also because of its "mutual defense clause," also known as its collective defense article. Article 5 establishes that when any member of NATO is attacked by a foreign entity, all members must engage in any further military responses by their fellow NATO member.<sup>52</sup> In the case of the 9/11 attacks, NATO invoked Article 5 for the first and only time in its history. NATO allies helped the United States carry out its military response against the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Including sending troops, providing weaponry, and compiling military intelligence and strategy.<sup>53</sup>

In November of 2001, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1378 addressing the situation in Afghanistan. The resolution condemned the Taliban for allowing al-Qaeda operations to be based in Afghanistan, called for humanitarian assistance in the region, and supported

the Afghans for the establishment of a new government.<sup>54</sup> On December 5, 2001, world leaders and prominent Afghan officials gathered in Bonn, Germany to discuss and establish a new Afghan government after the US's invasion of the country. Also invited were "non-state actors," or people of relevance in Afghanistan who are not part of the government. These non-state actors included warlords and other relevant actors in Afghan affairs.<sup>55</sup> It is important to note that from 1979 up to this point in 2001, there was no official, recognized government in Afghanistan. The Bonn Agreement set up a system to build a new government for the country. It established the Afghan Interim Authority, a temporary organization with a six-month mandate, after which the Afghan Transitional Authority (ATA) would be set to replace it and focus on managing the internal affairs of the country, acting as its temporary government.<sup>56</sup> After two years of the ATA's establishment, official government elections would be held.<sup>57</sup> During these two years, steps would be made to build a democratic government with separation of

51 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Birth of NATO," NATO, n.d., [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified\\_137851.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified_137851.htm).

52 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "10 Things You Need to Know about NATO," NATO, March 11, 2024, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/126169.htm>.

53 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "North Atlantic Council Ministerial Statement on Afghanistan," NATO, n.d., [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_183146.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_183146.htm).

54 United Nations Security Council. Resolution 1378, Situation in Afghanistan, S/RES/1378, (Nov. 14, 2001), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1378>.

55 Mukhopadhyay, Dipali. Warlords, Strongman Governors, and the State in Afghanistan / Dipali Mukhopadhyay. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

56 "Bonn Agreement," December 1, 2001, <https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/pdf0652?000>.

57 Dick Gupwell, "Loya Jirga Elects Karzai as New Head of State," *EurAsia Bulletin* 6 (2002), <https://web.archive.org/web/20120321204954/http://www.eias.org/publications/bulletin/2002/mayjun02/ebmayjun02.pdf>.



US Troops in Afghanistan

Credit: The U.S. Army

powers, fair elections, and guarantee the protection of rights for all citizens.<sup>58</sup>

In December of the same year, the Security Council passed Resolution 1386 which established the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The mission was set to secure Kabul and its surrounding areas and help the transition of a new government in Afghanistan. The resolution called for the cooperation of any willing member states to provide support and personnel.<sup>59</sup> After two years of the ISAF, the Security Council passed another resolution (Resolution 1510) that expanded the required areas of protection to areas far outside Kabul.<sup>60</sup> In the same year, the UN gave control of ISAF to NATO.

Under NATO's guidance, ISAF's location of operations continued to expand, until 2006, when they began managing the entire country.<sup>61</sup> In response, efforts of insurgency by the Taliban became more severe. In South Afghanistan, near the province of Helmand, attacks became a daily occurrence. This increase in violence led to the mass killing and rape of women by the Taliban. This increased violence towards soldiers and Afghan women caused ISAF to ask for more troops to be deployed to the region at the time.<sup>62</sup> Between 2010 and 2012, ISAF had 42 countries contributing to its efforts, 30 of which were NATO members. All contributing countries provided troops and military resources to help the mission in Afghanistan.<sup>63</sup>

In December 2014, NATO officially ended its mission in Afghanistan. They largely withdrew from the region, yet

retained around 13,000 troops to help the Afghan army.<sup>64</sup> This system continued for seven years until August of 2021 when President Biden announced the withdrawal of all American troops from the region, officially ending their 20-year military presence in Afghanistan.<sup>65</sup> As predicted, the withdrawal of American forces from Afghanistan allowed the Taliban to once again rise to power and begin cracking down on rights once protected in the region.<sup>66</sup> The United States and other foreign powers continue to be somewhat present in the region. The US in particular continues to enforce counterterrorism measures in the area. They have also continued to assist various humanitarian missions for the Afghan government.<sup>67</sup>

The War in Afghanistan, or the 'War on Terror', caused over 176,218 deaths in Afghanistan, 46,319 of which were Afghan civilians. These numbers do not account for deaths due to illness, lack of water and food, and other possible confounding ramifications of the war.<sup>68</sup>

## Internal Tensions

The war in Afghanistan not only exposed many issues in the country, including its vast terrorist network, but the end of the war, in 2021, also exposed rooted issues that have plagued Afghanistan for decades. One issue that remains is Afghanistan's severe internal division.

In 2015, a faction of the Islamic State called ISIS-K was created as a means to take control of Afghanistan. Apart from a difference in religious ideology, ISIS-K believes in uniting all Islamic states to become one country, while the Taliban is

58 United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2001/1154, Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan, S/RES/1378, (Dec. 5, 2001), [https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/AF\\_011205\\_AgreementProvisionalArrangementsinAfghanistan%28en%29.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/AF_011205_AgreementProvisionalArrangementsinAfghanistan%28en%29.pdf).

59 United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1386, Creation of the International Security Assistance Force, S/RES/1386, (Dec. 20, 2001), <http://unsct.com/en/resolutions/doc/1386>.

60 United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1510, Mission in Afghanistan, S/RES/1510, (Oct. 13, 2003), [https://web.archive.org/web/20101009021301/http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/mandate/unsct/resolution\\_1510.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20101009021301/http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/mandate/unsct/resolution_1510.pdf)

61 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "ISAF's Mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014)," NATO, n.d., [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_69366.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm).

62 Edward Girardet and Internet Archive, *Killing the Cranes: A Reporter's Journey through Three Decades of War in Afghanistan*, Internet Archive (White River Junction, Vt.: Chelsea Green Pub., 2011), <https://archive.org/details/killingcranesrep0000gira/page/n1/mode/1up>.

63 ChartistBin, "Countries Currently Contributing Troops to ISAF," ChartistBin, 2011, <http://chartsbin.com/view/nnu>.

64 Griff Witte, "Afghanistan War," in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, August 16, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Afghanistan-War>.

65 The White House, "Remarks by President Biden on the End of the War in Afghanistan," The White House, August 31, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/08/31/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-end-of-the-war-in-afghanistan/>.

66 Lindsay Maizland, "What Is the Taliban?," Council on Foreign Relations, January 19, 2023, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/taliban-afghanistan>.

67 Claire Mills, "Withdrawal of Military Forces in Afghanistan and Its Implications for Peace," *Commonslibrary.parliament.uk*, January 10, 2021, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9241/>.

68 Watson Institute, "Human Costs of U.S. Post-9/11 Wars: Direct War Deaths in Major War Zones | Figures | Costs of War," The Costs of War (Brown University, September 2021), <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/figures/2021/WarDeathToll>.

focused on independently fostering the Afghan state.<sup>69</sup> While both their ultimate goals clash, their main objective for the last decade has been gaining control of Afghanistan. After the US withdrawal in 2021, the Taliban quickly rose to power in Afghanistan. At the same time, ISIS-K rapidly developed and carried out a plan of opposition to Taliban control.<sup>70</sup> This plan consisted of terrorism plots, hit-and-run tactics, or quick surprise attacks that do not leave the enemy with time to react. These attacks were not only aimed at members of the Taliban but also at non-affiliated Afghan civilians.<sup>71</sup> Since the Taliban takeover, there have been 283 attacks on the country, claiming the lives of 671 citizens. This number has nearly doubled when compared to the two years before the Taliban takeover.<sup>72</sup> The attacks by ISIS-K are achieving their intended purpose: to undermine the Taliban government and turn popular opinion against them. ISIS-K has also specifically targeted high-level Taliban officials. By exposing the growing amounts of civilian casualties the Taliban government was not able to prevent, ISIS-K directly undermines the government's ability to effectively protect its civilians and maintain a peaceful government. In response, the Taliban has carried out their series of attacks, kidnapping high-level ISIS-K operatives and attacks targeted for the neutralization of their operatives and operations.<sup>73</sup>

Despite the Taliban's efforts to counter ISIS-K expansion into the region, UN reports have shown an increase in the faction's occupancy and a rise in civilian recruitments and training camps.<sup>74</sup> Out of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, it has

been reported that all have some sort of ongoing ISIS-K operation and presence.<sup>75</sup> Slowly, the faction continues to gain support from anti-Taliban groups and from civilians who have become frustrated with the growing precarious humanitarian and economic state of the country. ISIS-K expanded into Afghanistan with ease, due to the limitations of the Taliban's law enforcement. Afghanistan has a unique terrain with deep valleys, expansive mountain ranges, and various deserts, making it difficult for the Taliban or any central government to be able to supervise and be present in all 34 provinces.<sup>76</sup>

Further divisions in the country come from the various ethnic groups present in these 34 provinces. Afghanistan is home to more than 30 ethnic groups.<sup>77</sup> Each of the ethnic groups has different religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds which often cause tension and ethnic division. Primarily, it causes a lack of national identity, or nationalism, that has been one of the greatest struggles for a strong Afghan government.<sup>78</sup> Though no one ethnic group holds the majority of the population, the Taliban is predominantly made up of Pashtuns, who represent 42 percent of the population. The remaining 58 percent of the population is often not represented and discriminated against.<sup>79</sup> Calls have been made by Afghan political figures and the international community for greater inclusion of different ethnic groups into government to form a stronger and more united Afghanistan.

In comparison, governments in the South Asian region have continued to implement protections for minorities. India's

69 Krzysztof Strachota, "Islamic State-Khorasan: Global Jihad's New Front," OSW Centre for Eastern Studies, March 29, 2024, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2024-03-29/islamic-state-khorasan-global-jihads-new-front>.

70 Asfandiyar Mir, "The ISIS-K Resurgence | Wilson Center," [www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/isis-k-resurgence), October 8, 2021, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/isis-k-resurgence>.

71 Antonio Giustozzi, "How Much of a Threat Is the Islamic State in Khorasan?," RUSI, March 2022, <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/how-much-threat-islamic-state-khorasan>.

72 Lou Robinson et al., "'No One Feels Safe': The Taliban Promised to Provide Security to Afghans.," CNN, May 19, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/19/asia/isis-k-attacks-afghanistan-taliban-cmd-intl/index.html>.

73 Zia Ur Rehman, "Afghan Chaos Mounts as ISIS-K Tries to Tarnish Taliban Triumph," Nikkei Asia, September 2021, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Afghanistan-turmoil/Afghan-chaos-mounts-as-ISIS-K-tries-to-tarnish-Taliban-triumph>.

74 Jeff Seldin, "UN Report Warns Al-Qaida, Islamic State Growing in Afghanistan," VOA, June 14, 2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/un-report-warns-al-qaida-islamic-state-growing-in-afghanistan/7138133.html>.

75 Jonathan Landay, "U.N. Envoy Says Islamic State Now Appears Present in All Afghan Provinces," *Reuters*, November 17, 2021, sec. Asia Pacific, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/un-envoy-says-islamic-state-now-appears-present-all-afghan-provinces-2021-11-17/>.

76 Anatol Lieven, "Afghan Terrain," [carnegieendowment.org](http://carnegieendowment.org), October 2001, <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2001/10/afghan-terrain?lang=en>; United States Institute of Peace, "Establishing the Rule of Law in Afghanistan about the REPORT," 2004, <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr117.pdf>.

77 Mirwais Balkhi, "Afghanistan's Necessary Shift in Ethnic Narratives: From Dominance to Dialogue | Wilson Center," [www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org), March 2023, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/afghanistans-necessary-shift-ethnic-narratives-dominance-dialogue>.

78 Anthony Hyman, "Nationalism in Afghanistan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34, no. 2 (2002): 299–315. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3879829>.

79 Amit Kumar and Aayushi Malhotra, "Factoring Ethnicity in Taliban's Quest for Legitimacy | GJIA," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, April 17, 2024, <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2024/04/17/factoring-ethnicity-in-talibans-quest-for-legitimacy-an-anthropological-rewiring-of-the-power-structure/>.

Constitution calls for secularism, or the practice of separating religious issues from governmental procedures.<sup>80</sup> This has prevented the government from being influenced by religion and allows affairs of the country to be focused on policies that help the people. India has also made clear its intolerance for discrimination against religious, lingual, and cultural minorities. And, it has allowed religions and other cultural minorities to be able to form educational institutions of their liking.

Former Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, a continued popular political figure in Afghanistan, has called for unity after the war. He mentioned the need for inclusive representation in government, stating that this would help “gain the trust” of the Afghan people and unite the country. Karzai emphasized the need for Afghan citizens who emigrated to foreign countries to return and help rebuild the government. He stated that before getting the international community to support Afghanistan, the country must unite its citizens and gain their trust first.<sup>81</sup>

Acceptance is a crucial step to take to foster an Afghan national identity. There has been no official government census held

in Afghanistan since 1979. Though other unofficial censuses have been introduced throughout Afghanistan, many civilians refuse to add their language spoken their first-learned language, or their ethnicity out of fear.<sup>82</sup> Since the government takeover by the Taliban, they have held public executions and severe punishment for those who are seen to not follow their rule of law, which is often subjective to the Taliban’s judgment.<sup>83</sup> This malicious treatment of minority groups derives from not only religious strife but a lack of inclusion and representation from minority groups in the Afghan government, the creators and enforcers of laws.

### Humanitarian Crisis in Afghanistan

The growing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan stems mainly from the dire economic state from the end of the War in Afghanistan in 2021. With the end of the war, the United States and other foreign powers withdrew their aid to Afghanistan and established economic sanctions in the region. Sanctions, or financial penalties on individuals and corporations, have been instituted on major leaders of the Taliban regime since

80 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “MEASURES to PROMOTE and PROTECT the RIGHTS of MINORITIES in INDIA,” accessed August 15, 2024, [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Declaration\\_GA\\_Report/States/India.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Declaration_GA_Report/States/India.pdf).

81 Steve Inskeep and Rachel Treisman, “Hamid Karzai Stays on in Afghanistan — Hoping for the Best, but Unable to Leave,” NPR.org, August 8, 2022, <https://www.npr.org/2022/08/08/1115674232/afghanistan-taliban-hamid-karzai-us-withdrawal>.

82 Minority Rights Group, “Afghanistan - Minority Rights Group,” Minority Rights Group, 2015, <https://minorityrights.org/country/afghanistan/>.

83 Amnesty International, “Human Rights in Afghanistan,” Amnesty International, n.d., <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/asia-and-the-pacific/south-asia/afghanistan/report-afghanistan/>.

Children seeking medical attention in Afghanistan

Credit: Staff Sgt. Andrew Smith (U.S Army Photographer)



1999. As the war progressed, several economic sanctions were carried out as a means of counterterrorism.<sup>84</sup> These economic sanctions were and continue to be established by the United States and the United Nations.<sup>85</sup> Such sanctions, along with the freeze by foreign powers on the Afghan Central Bank, have made it extremely difficult for Afghanistan's economy to operate efficiently.<sup>86</sup>

On top of economic penalties by foreign powers, many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the region have left due to the Taliban's strict and, often, oppressive laws. NGOs, the UN, and foreign powers have recognized the unfair treatment of women and minorities by the Taliban which are often named to be a breach of their human rights. Since its ascent to power, the Taliban has continued to restrict the presence of women in public spaces.<sup>87</sup> They have prevented women from traveling for long distances without a chaperone, demanded women not speak above a whisper in public, banned women from going to restaurants alone, and imposed many other unjust restrictions. Education for women has become increasingly more restrictive, with the Taliban banning girls' ability to enroll in any education past primary school. Alongside such policies, they have forbidden women from working, including volunteering and working in NGOs and for the UN.<sup>88</sup> The inability of women to work and be a part of society has not only been attributed to a series of human rights violations in Afghanistan but also impedes them from participating in the job market and contributing to the economy.

Minority groups also face continued discrimination in

Afghanistan. From religious minorities to LGBTQ+, there has been a trend of marginalization and inequity that continues to plague Afghanistan in more ways than one. As it stands, nearly 84.7 percent of the Afghan population identifies as Sunni Muslim and 10-15 percent as Shia Muslim, with only 0.3 percent as another religion.<sup>89</sup> Within those 0.3 percent are civilians who identify as Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Sikh, and more. The freedom of religion is asserted in the Afghan constitution, but religious minorities continue to be oppressed throughout the country.<sup>90</sup> Attacks in Shi'a majority areas have become increasingly common, with attackers often not being faced with prosecution or any punishment for their actions. The Taliban refuses to acknowledge the attacks in the region and continues to promote divisions and exclusion through their policies.<sup>91</sup> Additionally, religious minorities have been banned from practicing in public spaces or anywhere they would be seen by others.<sup>92</sup> In 2023, the Taliban restricted all educational institutions, including private universities, to use any text that conforms with another religion apart from Sunni.<sup>93</sup> While these policies are in effect, the ability for Afghans to practice their religions has become increasingly restrictive and non-inclusive.

Apart from several human rights violations present in Afghanistan, the growingly precarious economic state of the country has continued to greatly impact the Afghan people in many ways. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Afghanistan, Ramiz Alakbarov, has called the crisis in Afghanistan "the world's largest humanitarian crisis."<sup>94</sup> Since

84 Jason Bartlett, "Sanctions by the Numbers: Spotlight on Afghanistan," [www.cnas.org](https://www.cnas.org/publications/reports/sanctions-by-the-numbers-afghanistan/), October 28, 2021, <https://www.cnas.org/publications/reports/sanctions-by-the-numbers-afghanistan/>.

85 Daniel F. Runde et al., "The Future of Assistance for Afghanistan: A Dilemma," [Www.csis.org](https://www.csis.org/analysis/future-assistance-afghanistan-dilemma), June 13, 2024, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/future-assistance-afghanistan-dilemma>.

86 Zeba Warsi, "Afghanistan Sinks Deeper into Crisis as Sanctions Take Heavy Toll on Civilians," PBS News, August 26, 2022, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/amp/show/afghanistan-sinks-deeper-into-crisis-as-sanctions-take-heavy-toll-on-civilians>.

87 Amnesty International, "Afghanistan: The Taliban's War on Women: The Crime against Humanity of Gender Persecution in Afghanistan," Amnesty International, May 25, 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa11/6789/2023/en/>.

88 Amnesty International, "Human Rights in Afghanistan," Amnesty International, n.d., <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/asia-and-the-pacific/south-asia/afghanistan/report-afghanistan/>.

89 Central Intelligence Agency, "Country Summary," CIA.gov (Central Intelligence Agency, September 2024), <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/afghanistan/summaries>.

90 The APPG for International Freedom of Religion or Belief, "Afghanistan," The APPG for International Freedom of Religion or Belief, 2020, <https://appgfreedomofreligionorbelief.org/afghanistan/>.

91 Tawab Danish, "Hazaras and Shias: Violence, Discrimination, and Exclusion under the Taliban," [www.jurist.org](https://www.jurist.org/commentary/2024/05/hazaras-and-shias-violence-discrimination-and-exclusion-under-taliban/), May 14, 2024, <https://www.jurist.org/commentary/2024/05/hazaras-and-shias-violence-discrimination-and-exclusion-under-taliban/>.

92 Afghanistan International, "Religious Minorities Face Harassment in Afghanistan, Reports USCIRF," Afghanistan International, May 2024, <https://www.afintl.com/en/202405025654>.

93 Radio Azadi, "Taliban Bans Books from Minority Muslim Sects in Private University Libraries," *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, December 2023, <https://www.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-taliban-religious-minorities/32743636.html>.

94 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Population | Humanitarian Action," Humanitarian Action, 2024, <https://humanitarianaction.info/plan/1185/population#page-title>.



2021, one in every two Afghans are impoverished, meaning they earn less than USD one a day. Since the ascension of the Taliban, unemployment has increased by 50 percent and the overall GDP has decreased by approximately 25 percent.<sup>95</sup> Out of the 44.5 million Afghan citizens, it is estimated that 23.7 million are in need.<sup>96</sup> Over 40 percent of Afghans have been found to have “acute food insecurity,” meaning they lack enough food for it to become a danger to their health and well-being. Afghanistan holds the fourth highest ranking for food insecurity in the world.<sup>97</sup> Families are often unable to buy sufficient food, leading to over 9.5 percent of Afghan children being faced with hunger and malnutrition, and 41 percent of children being stunted in their growth.<sup>98</sup>

Apart from the economy, climate change has also contributed to the increased poverty in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a landlocked country, meaning that it has no major sources of water such as the sea or the ocean. The country depends heavily on rainfall for its agriculture. Yet, because of climate change and the increased temperatures, there has been less rain in the region, causing severe droughts and floods since 2021.<sup>99</sup> When droughts occur any water or humidity from the soil is evaporated by the heat, and the soil becomes very dry. Because of this, the soil is not able to support or absorb any new water from rainfall, leading to the water running on the surface of the soil instead. This causes severe flooding, including flash floods.<sup>100</sup>

The Himalayan mountains have also been affected by

climate change. The 1550-mile mountain range that spans from Afghanistan to Myanmar has faced rapid melting of its glaciers causing more runoff water on Afghan soil and, therefore, more flooding.<sup>101</sup> Flooding can cause severe damage to infrastructure, disrupt agricultural production, and risk the lives of civilians as well. The most recent floods in Afghanistan have claimed the lives of 350 Afghan people, damaged 7,800 homes, and displaced 5,000 families.<sup>102</sup> In response to an increase in heavy rainfall, the Afghan government promoted the building of dams and canals to redirect water and prevent further devastation to civilians. Despite those efforts, rainfall continues to ravage villages and cause severe displacement among Afghan communities.<sup>103</sup> It has been estimated that every year, climate disasters in Afghanistan affect around 200,000 civilians. Those civilians are often forced to relocate to unsafe and temporary accommodations such as tents or abandoned buildings with little to no access to food and water.<sup>104</sup> The number of displaced people in Afghanistan continues to grow each year, with numbers from 2023 nearly double those from 2022.<sup>105</sup>

## Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking

For the better part of the 2000s, Afghanistan produced three-fourths of the world’s supply of heroin and methamphetamine. Production slowly decreased with new policies aimed at banning opium poppy cultivation, yet, since 2019, Afghanistan still produced around 84 percent of the world’s supply.<sup>106</sup>

95 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Afghanistan,” OCHA, June 19, 2019, <https://www.unocha.org/afghanistan>.  
 96 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Population | Humanitarian Action,” Humanitarian Action, 2024, <https://humanitarianaction.info/plan/1185/population#page-title>.  
 97 International Rescue Committee, “Afghanistan: An Entire Population Pushed into Poverty | International Rescue Committee (IRC),” [www.rescue.org](http://www.rescue.org), August 9, 2023, <https://www.rescue.org/article/afghanistan-entire-population-pushed-poverty>.  
 98 United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund, “The Afghanistan Multidimensional Poverty Index (A-MPI),” 2017, <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/sites/unicef.org.afghanistan/files/2019-03/MPI%20key%20points.pdf>.  
 99 International Rescue Committee, “Afghanistan: An Entire Population Pushed into Poverty | International Rescue Committee (IRC),” [www.rescue.org](http://www.rescue.org), August 9, 2023, <https://www.rescue.org/article/afghanistan-entire-population-pushed-poverty>.  
 100 International Rescue Committee, “What Is Drought? Causes, Impact & Countries Most Affected | International Rescue Committee (IRC),” [www.rescue.org](http://www.rescue.org), July 13, 2023, <https://www.rescue.org/article/what-drought-causes-impact-countries-most-affected>.  
 101 Vaishnavi Chandrashekhar, “As Himalayan Glaciers Melt, a Water Crisis Looms in South Asia,” *Yale E360*, October 3, 2022, <https://e360.yale.edu/features/himalayas-glaciers-climate-change>.  
 102 United Nations International Children’s Fund, “Flash Floods in Afghanistan Posing Urgent and Persistent Threat to Children,” [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), June 2024, <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/press-releases/flash-floods-afghanistan-posing-urgent-and-persistent-threat-children>.  
 103 Ruchi Kumar, “How the Taliban Adds to Afghanistan’s Woes When It Comes to Climate-Fueled Disasters,” *NPR*, June 18, 2024, <https://www.npr.org/sections/goats-and-soda/2024/06/04/g-s1-2714/afghanistan-flooding-crisis-taliban-sanctions>.  
 104 Afghanaid, “The Climate Crisis in Afghanistan: A Humanitarian Emergency,” [afghanaid.org](http://afghanaid.org), April 22, 2024, <https://www.afghanaid.org.uk/news/the-climate-crisis-in-afghanistan-a-humanitarian-emergency>.  
 105 Internal Displacement Monitoring Committee, “Afghanistan,” IDMC - Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, May 2024, <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/afghanistan/>.  
 106 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “2020 World Drug Report” (United Nations, April 2020), [https://wdr.unodc.org/wdr2020/field/WDR20\\_Booklet\\_3.pdf](https://wdr.unodc.org/wdr2020/field/WDR20_Booklet_3.pdf).

Though the Taliban banned production in its provinces in the 1990s, production, and trade continued through the Afghan War as a main source of revenue for the Taliban.<sup>107</sup> From 2018 to 2019, the Taliban gained around USD 400 million from its opium trade. After the US withdrawal from the region and the Taliban's rise to power, opium production boomed. In 2022, however, the Taliban outlawed poppy cultivation and trade, causing production to decrease by over 95 percent.<sup>108</sup> Before that, opium was responsible for one-third of the total national income of Afghanistan.<sup>109</sup> Without that sector of the economy, Afghanistan has continued to suffer greatly, and has only added to Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis. The country's agricultural economy has lost more than USD one billion every year, causing many farmers to lose their jobs and face malnutrition and lack of housing.<sup>110</sup>

The country's long history with opium has not escaped its citizens. One million Afghans suffer from some form of opiate addiction.<sup>111</sup> With the constant withdrawal of NGOs from the region, Afghanistan has had a difficult time accommodating the growing needs of its citizens who are faced with addiction. Drug treatment centers are unable to provide enough food for their patients and suffer from a lack of medication to help patients through the drug withdrawal process. After patients are released from the 45-day program, they are faced with poverty, hunger, and a lack of housing.<sup>112</sup>

Afghanistan's large opium market also opened the door for organized crime. Organized crime is a series of criminal activity planned and executed by a group of individuals.<sup>113</sup>

They often carry out crimes such as drug trafficking and trade, human trafficking, and other such activities. Organized crime networks have been integral to the country's continued drug trade, being involved in both the production and distribution of products.<sup>114</sup>

The definitions between organized crime networks and terrorist groups in Afghanistan are interchangeable. The Taliban, a classified terrorist group in more than a dozen countries around the world, is rumored to carry out drug trade, as an organized crime network would.<sup>115</sup> But as the party that controls Afghanistan, it can also utilize its control for profit. With the banning of opium production and distribution, the Taliban decreased the profit of their competitors, yet, they increased the demand for their product and therefore gained more profit from selling overall.<sup>116</sup> The problem is exacerbated by the fact that this profit is not reflected in the country's economy. Instead, it increases the power of the Taliban and further worsens the growing humanitarian crisis in the region.

The involvement of the Taliban in drug trading and trafficking makes it difficult for the enforcement and striking down of other organized crime networks. According to the Global Crime Index, Afghanistan has some of the highest levels of criminal activity in the world, receiving a 7.08 out of 10. And, has some of the lowest levels when it comes to combating organized crime, being rated 2.67 out of 10.<sup>117</sup>

Organized crime networks in Afghanistan are not only responsible for the drug trade but are also involved in human trafficking and other crimes as well. An estimated 505,000

107 Jonathan Landay, "Profits and Poppy: Afghanistan's Illegal Drug Trade a Boon for Taliban," Reuters, August 16, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/profits-popy-afghanistans-illegal-drug-trade-boon-taliban-2021-08-16/>.

108 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Afghanistan Opium Cultivation in 2023 Declined 95 per Cent Following Drug Ban: New UNODC Survey," United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime, November 5, 2023, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2023/November/afghanistan-opium-cultivation-in-2023-declined-95-per-cent-following-drug-ban\\_-new-unodc-survey.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2023/November/afghanistan-opium-cultivation-in-2023-declined-95-per-cent-following-drug-ban_-new-unodc-survey.html).

109 William Byrd and Christopher Ward, "DRUGS and DEVELOPMENT in AFGHANISTAN," 2004, <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/156391468740439773/pdf/30903.pdf>.

110 William Byrd, "The Taliban's Successful Opium Ban Is Bad for Afghans and the World," United States Institute of Peace, June 8, 2023, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/06/talibans-successful-opium-ban-bad-afghans-and-world>.

111 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "UNODC Reports Major and Growing Drug Abuse in Afghanistan," United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2010/June/unodc-reports-major-and-growing-drug-abuse-in-afghanistan.html>.

112 United Nations News, "A Knowledge-Based Approach to Tackling Afghanistan's Drug Abuse Crisis | UN News," news.un.org, June 25, 2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/06/1138067>.

113 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Organized Crime Module 1 Key Issues: Defining Organized Crime," Unodc.org, 2019, <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/organized-crime/module-1/key-issues/defining-organized-crime.html>.

114 Global Organized Crime Index, "Criminality in Afghanistan - the Organized Crime Index," ocindex.net, n.d., <https://ocindex.net/country/afghanistan>.

115 Gretchen Peters, *How Opium Profits the Taliban* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute Of Peace, 2009).

116 Lynne O'Donnell, "The Taliban Have a New Drug of Choice," Foreign Policy, February 22, 2024, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/09/13/taliban-afghanistan-drugs-ban-economy-opium-popy-meth-heroin-trade/>.

117 Arian M Sharifi, "The Taliban, Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime," Global Initiative, February 2023, <https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/taliban-terrorism-ocindex/>.

Afghans are considered to be a part of “modern-day slavery,” meaning they work without any form of compensation. This term falls under the same umbrella as human trafficking.<sup>118</sup> Most victims of human trafficking in Afghanistan are children who are forced to work in carpet making, poppy cultivation, and domestic work, including cleaning, cooking, and other jobs performed in the home. Often, these children are either forced to migrate by themselves to other regions of the country for work or, they are sold by their parents to traffickers to pay debts. Children are often used by groups such as ISIS-K and the Taliban to help with their operations, such as by planting bombs, spying, or conducting other illicit activities.<sup>119</sup> Though many of these children were recruited by force and by the means of human trafficking, they are regularly imprisoned, without trial, for their involvement in criminal activities.<sup>120</sup>

In 2022, a Security Council report concluded that terrorist groups in Afghanistan “enjoy greater freedom than any time in recent history.”<sup>121</sup> Since the takeover by the Taliban, crime has increased significantly, which can be attributed to the economy or a lack of formal enforcement of laws in a weakened Afghanistan.<sup>122</sup> Either way, the safety of Afghan citizens is in jeopardy. According to the Global Terrorism Index, Afghanistan ranks first when it comes to the impact of terrorism on the country.<sup>123</sup> Hundreds of thousands are trafficked each year and the country is faced with a growing economic and governmental crisis that cannot accommodate growing crime rates.<sup>124</sup>

## Current Status

### Ongoing Tensions with Pakistan

As mentioned previously, Pakistan and Afghanistan have engaged in combat over differing border claims. Dating back to 1893, the Durand Line was established by British India (now Pakistan and India) and Afghanistan as an official border between the two countries.<sup>125</sup> The issue with the border was that it separated various ethnic groups that resided along the area, and, today, the Pakistani and Afghan border both claim their right to possess ethnic land that was divided by the Durand Line.<sup>126</sup> Fighting along the border takes many forms, from air strikes to suicide bombers.<sup>127</sup> Attacks along the Line happen frequently, with deaths occurring almost daily.

The most popular ethnic groups along the border are the Pashtuns, who have been separated by the Durand Line. In recent years, the Taliban has called for the Pashtuns on the Pakistani side to form their government apart from the Pakistani government. The largest ethnic group in Pakistan is the Punjabis.<sup>128</sup> In response to the growing separatist sentiment from Pashtuns, the Pakistani government responded by allowing Punjabis to provide oversight on Pashtuns and their provinces which caused more anger from the Pashtuns and revived their want for separation from Pakistan.<sup>129</sup>

Because of the growing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan

118 U.S. Department of State, “What is Modern Slavery?,” United States Department of State, 2019, <https://www.state.gov/what-is-modern-slavery/>.

119 United States Department of State, “Afghanistan,” United States Department of State, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-trafficking-in-persons-report/afghanistan/>.

120 Alex Crawford, “Afghanistan: Inside Prison Where Children as Young as 12 Are Held and Female Governor Has Vanished,” Sky News, February 2022, <https://news.sky.com/story/afghanistan-inside-prison-where-children-as-young-as-12-are-held-and-female-governor-has-vanished-12534928>.

121 United Nations Security Council, Resolution 63\*, Report on the threat of ISIL, S/2022/64\*, (Jan. 28, 2022), <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n22/231/80/pdf/n2223180.pdf?token=RqSltiGiSnQC3pt3fw&fe=true>.

122 Arian M Sharifi, “The Taliban, Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime,” Global Initiative, February 2023, <https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/taliban-terrorism-ocindex/>; Seth Jones, “Countering a Resurgent Terrorist Threat in Afghanistan,” Council on Foreign Relations, April 14, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/report/countering-resurgent-terrorist-threat-afghanistan>

123 Institute for Economics & Peace, “Global Terrorism Index 2023” (Institute for Economics & Peace, March 2023), <https://www.economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/GTI-2023-web.pdf>.

124 Amnesty International, “Everything You Need to Know about Human Rights in Afghanistan 2020,” Amnesty International, 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/asia-and-the-pacific/south-asia/afghanistan/report-afghanistan/>.

125 Encyclopedia Britannica, “Durand Line | Boundary, Asia,” Encyclopedia Britannica, August 4, 2024., <https://www.britannica.com/event/Durand-Line>.

126 European Foundation for South Asian Studies, “The Durand Line - a Razor’s Edge between Afghanistan & Pakistan,” Efsas.org, 2017, <https://www.efsas.org/publications/study-papers/the-durand-line-a-razors-edge-between-afghanistan-and-pakistan/>.

127 National Geographic, “The Durand Line | National Geographic Society,” [education.nationalgeographic.org](https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/durand-line/), n.d., <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/durand-line/>.

128 Minority Rights Group, “Pashtuns in Pakistan - Minority Rights Group,” Minority Rights Group, April 12, 2024, <https://minorityrights.org/communities/pashtuns-2/>.

129 National Geographic, “The Durand Line | National Geographic Society,” [education.nationalgeographic.org](https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/durand-line/), n.d., <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/durand-line/>.

and people's fear of the Taliban, 4.4 million Afghans have sought refuge in Pakistan.<sup>130</sup> Pakistan has faced trouble accommodating the immense influx of Afghan migrants. The large migration has caused economic inflation, an increase in illegal drug trading, and the spread of several diseases including malaria, poliomyelitis, and more.<sup>131</sup> Additionally, Pakistan has claimed the refugee crisis has caused a threat to Pakistani national security, claiming a majority of suicide bombings in 2023 were by Afghan citizens.<sup>132</sup> In response, Pakistan has vowed to deport Afghan migrants back to Afghanistan.

In October of 2023, Pakistan outlined a three-phase plan to encourage the emigration of “all illegal” Afghan citizens.<sup>133</sup> The first phase gave migrants 30 days to leave Pakistan or be faced with detainment and forceful deportation. The second phase, beginning in June of 2024, plans to deport all holders of an Afghan Citizen Card (ACC). An ACC is a document given to Afghan nationals by the Pakistani government

130 Asif Shahzad, “Pakistan Orders Illegal Immigrants, Including 1.73 Mln Afghans, to Leave,” Reuters, October 3, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/pakistan-orders-all-illegal-immigrants-leave-after-suicide-bombings-2023-10-03/>.

131 Sohail Anwar and Muhammad Hassan, “AFGHAN REFUGEES: IMPLICATIONS on PAKISTAN,” *Journal of Int’L Affairs* 4 (2021), <https://www.pjia.com.pk/index.php/pjia/article/download/226/171>.

132 Asif Shahzad, “Pakistan Orders Illegal Immigrants, Including 1.73 Mln Afghans, to Leave,” Reuters, October 3, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/pakistan-orders-all-illegal-immigrants-leave-after-suicide-bombings-2023-10-03/>.

133 Ali M. Latifi and Lutfullah Samim Sherzai, “The New Humanitarian | Pakistan Threatens New Wave of Afghan Deportations,” [www.thenewhumanitarian.org](http://www.thenewhumanitarian.org), April 10, 2024, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2024/04/10/pakistan-threatens-new-wave-afghan-deportations>.

134 Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees Punjab, “Afghan Citizen Card | Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees,” Punjab.gov.pk, 2017, [https://car.punjab.gov.pk/afghan\\_citizen\\_card](https://car.punjab.gov.pk/afghan_citizen_card).

135 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “Proof of Registration Card (PoR),” UNHCR Pakistan, n.d., <https://help.unhcr.org/pakistan/proof-of-registration-card-por/>.

136 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “The 1951 Refugee Convention,” UNHCR US, n.d., <https://www.unhcr.org/us/about-unhcr/who-we-are/1951-refugee-convention>.

aimed at identifying migrants who came to Pakistan as legal immigrants.<sup>134</sup> The third phase of the plan expels Afghan nationals with a Proof of Registration Card—a card given by the UN High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) that certifies Afghan migrants who entered the country legally and allows them to remain in the country.<sup>135</sup> In total, Pakistan will have forced two million Afghans out of the country by the end of their three-phase plan.

In 1951, the UN held the Refugee Convention, which not only created the UNHCR but defined who refugees were and their rights.<sup>136</sup> All signatories of the resolution agreed upon in the Convention uphold the protection of refugees from countries where they are to be persecuted. Unfortunately, Pakistan is among the six countries that have not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention. Though not all Afghan citizens who Pakistan has deemed as “illegal foreigners” are refugees, their safety and livelihoods are being threatened by these waves

Afghan refugees returning into their country after Pakistan government deadline

Credit: Voice of America



of Pakistani deportations.

In response to the plans of the Pakistani government, migrants and refugees have started to hide from fear of prosecution and detention. Many Afghan migrants are calling on the Pakistani government to give them more time to leave their homes and return to Afghanistan. Pakistan has not afforded them more time and has ignored calls by the international community to ease their deportation measures. Many countries have called Pakistan's actions towards these migrants, violations of human rights and outlined how this forced migration would worsen the already dire humanitarian crises in Afghanistan.<sup>137</sup> The Taliban have also responded to these deportation measures, asking for more time to prepare for the influx of returned migrants to the country.<sup>138</sup>

These migrations and Pakistan's failure to listen to the Taliban's requests might come as a harm to their recovering relationship. Since the Taliban takeover, relations between the two countries have turned to the worst. Both accuse the other of attacks along the border and blame each other for not being able to control the militants orchestrating the deadly attacks.<sup>139</sup> Recently, Pakistan and Afghanistan have started to reform their relationship and have cooperated in information-gathering operations. In October of 2023, after a fatal attack across the Pakistani-Afghan border that killed five Chinese citizens, officials from both governments gathered in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad to share information they gathered on these attacks.<sup>140</sup> Additionally, in June of 2024, Pakistan expressed the need for the Taliban to be involved in UN meetings discussing Afghanistan's involvement in the international community; a huge step for Taliban and Pakistani relations. Yet, with these new Pakistani policies on Afghan migrants, their relationship could backslide due to

the negative consequences the return of those migrants would cause to Afghanistan.

A large part of the difficulties between the two countries comes from their lack of cooperation and communication. Since Pakistan's independence in 1947, no government of Afghanistan has recognized Pakistani borders, including the Taliban. Alongside border tensions, both countries have blamed each other for terrorist attacks on the other.<sup>141</sup> No country has taken responsibility for the cross-border attacks, yet, they have both accused the other of the attacks.<sup>142</sup> This animosity has further strained the relationship between the two countries and made it more difficult to resolve issues along the border.

### Relationship with the International Community

After the Taliban takeover, Afghanistan's relationship with the international community remains limited. Most of the global community has failed to recognize the Taliban as the official government of Afghanistan. This has caused Afghanistan to become isolated politically and economically.

In December of 2022, the Taliban officially banned women from being part of international NGOs in the country. In response, various NGOs and charitable organizations withdrew from the region. Their presence in Afghanistan was essential to the overall survival of the country and helped tame the growing humanitarian issues.<sup>143</sup> Likewise, international aid from other countries has slimmed down throughout the years as the treatment of the Taliban towards women and minorities worsened, and since there have been no clear signs of improvement in the region from the aid.

The UN continues to try to help Afghanistan. In 2002, the

137 UN News, "Pakistan Urged to Halt Afghan Deportations to Avoid 'Human Rights Catastrophe' | UN News," news.un.org, October 27, 2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1142887>.

138 Al Jazeera, "Taliban Urges Pakistan to Grant More Time for Undocumented Afghans to Leave," Al Jazeera, November 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/1/taliban-urges-pakistan-to-grant-more-time-for-undocumented-afghans-to-leave>.

139 Zia Ur Rehman, "Why Did the Afghan Taliban Sour on Pakistan? – DW – 04/20/2024," dw.com, April 2024, <https://www.dw.com/en/why-did-the-afghan-taliban-sour-on-pakistan/a-68873894>.

140 Ayaz Gul, "Pakistan Shares Probe Findings with Afghan Taliban on Attack against Chinese Nationals," Voice of America, May 30, 2024, <https://www.voanews.com/a/pakistan-shares-probe-findings-with-afghan-taliban-on-attack-against-chinese-nationals-7636657.html>.

141 Astha Rajvanshi, "Why Pakistan-Afghanistan Tensions Are Soaring," TIME, July 5, 2024, <https://time.com/6995069/pakistan-afghanistan-relations-taliban/>.

142 Abid Hussain, "Tensions High after Pakistan Launches Cross-Border Attacks into Afghanistan," Al Jazeera, March 18, 2024, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/3/18/pakistan-launch-retaliatory-strikes-inside-afghanistan-raising-tensions>.

143 Leslie Roberts, "Taliban Ban on Female NGO Staff Is Deepening Afghanistan's Public Health Crisis," www.science.org, January 2023, <https://www.science.org/content/article/taliban-s-ban-female-staff-ngos-deepening-afghanistan-s-public-health-crisis>.

Security Council established the United Nations Assistance Mission (UNAMA) in Afghanistan through Resolution 1401. The overall goal of the mission is to help the Afghan people create peace and political stability in the country. The mission has also served as an intermediary for Afghanistan in its affairs with Pakistan and Iran and is used to provide the world with reports of happenings in Afghanistan, including death tolls, conflicts in the region, and more.<sup>144</sup> In March of 2024, the UN Security Council renewed UNAMA for two more years until March of 2025.<sup>145</sup> Many have called for the end of UNAMA, saying its presence unproductive and costly.<sup>146</sup>

The UN has repeatedly claimed that “Afghanistan’s future depends on mutual engagement between the Taliban and the international community.”<sup>147</sup> Even so, there has been a continued stall on any possible collaboration or compromise between the Taliban and the international community. A majority of the global community has expressed the need for

144 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, “About,” UNAMA, May 7, 2014, <https://unama.unmissions.org/about>.

145 United Nations Security Council, “Security Council Extends Mandate of United Nations Mission in Afghanistan, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2727 (2024) | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases,” [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15628.doc.htm), March 15, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15628.doc.htm>.

146 Hasht-E Subh, “To Stay or to Leave: Assessing the Impact of UNAMA’s Presence in Afghanistan,” *Hasht e Subh*, April 18, 2023, <https://8am.media/eng/to-stay-or-to-leave-assessing-the-impact-of-unamas-presence-in-afghanistan/>.

147 UN News, “Afghanistan’s Future Depends on Taliban’s Engagement with World, but Restrictions on Women Signal Lack of International Commitments, Briefer Warns Security Council | UN Press,” [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc15038.doc.htm), September 27, 2022, <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc15038.doc.htm>.

148 Human Rights Watch, “The Taliban and the Global Backlash against Women’s Rights | Human Rights Watch,” *Human Rights Watch*, February 6, 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/02/06/taliban-and-global-backlash-against-womens-rights>.

149 Jessie Tu, “UN Criticised for Complying with Taliban’s Restriction on Women in Talks,” *Women’s Agenda*, July 1, 2024, <https://womensagenda.com.au/latest/un-criticised-for-complying-with-talibans-restriction-on-women-in-talks/>.

150 Edith M. Lederer, “UN Envoy Defends Failure to Include Afghan Women in Upcoming Meeting with the Taliban in Qatar,” *AP News*, June 22, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/un-afghanistan-taliban-women-girls-education-rights-88e7f5aadb25439b328c90283ae6ab5a>.

Afghanistan to reinstate and promote women’s rights to be included in the international community. The Taliban has not made any advancements in protecting women’s rights. Instead, they have further isolated women from society.<sup>148</sup> The Taliban has continued to claim their treatment of women derives from their religious teachings and therefore their freedom to exercise their religion, and have called for the international community to simply accept the fact.<sup>149</sup>

The international community has often accepted the terms of the Taliban in their continued talks, looking to the road of compromise. In July of 2024, the UN and the Taliban held talks. The Taliban made two requests: first, that women’s rights would not be discussed, and, second, that no Afghan women would be allowed to participate in the meetings. Furthermore, they added the condition that in any further talks with the UN, they would acknowledge the religious freedoms and practices in the country to make significant progress.<sup>150</sup> The



The Taliban

Credit: Voice of America News

UN agreed to those conditions, despite the backlash, and continued discussions with Afghanistan centered around counterterrorism and Afghanistan's relationship with Russia and China.<sup>151</sup>

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Roza Otunbayeva, has often expressed that there can be no true changes and progress to the Situation in Afghanistan if the UN does not engage with the Taliban.<sup>152</sup> At the same time, others, such as activist Shaharзад Akbar, advise the UN to maintain its stance and not engage with the Taliban until all women's rights restrictions are ended and women are once again incorporated into society.<sup>153</sup>

Afghanistan's isolation has caused it to be cut off from the rest of the global economy. In return, the Afghan economy has seen a complete collapse. Though Afghanistan remains rich in its natural resources, the inability to trade has crippled its economy. Economic activity such as public spending and exports are essential to the revitalization of Afghanistan's economy, which is only possible with greater involvement of Afghanistan with the rest of the world.<sup>154</sup>

In 2011, the UN Security Council established Resolution 1988 which established sanctions on members of the Taliban and those who were seen to threaten the security of Afghanistan.<sup>155</sup> Individual countries have also joined the efforts of sanctioning the Taliban due to their behavior towards women, trafficking, and other criminal activities.<sup>156</sup> Still, such efforts have been seen to harm citizens more than the Taliban. This further exacerbates the growing humanitarian crises in the country

and drives the economy into chaos.<sup>157</sup> In December of 2023, the UN Security Council extended the sanctions on the members of the Taliban until December of 2024, with member states further establishing that the sanctions are vital to counterterrorism measures in the area and stopping terrorist organizations in the region from growing.<sup>158</sup>

## Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution outlining 17 general goals and principles for the UN, called Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). These goals are aimed at promoting global peace and security and promoting equality and the well-being of all global citizens.<sup>159</sup> All UN resolutions are in pursuit of achieving at least one of the SDGs. In the case of Afghanistan, the situation addresses SDG 1: No Poverty, SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls, and SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.

SDG 1: No Poverty calls for the end of extreme poverty in "all forms." Not only does this goal outline the need for all people to be able to earn more than USD 1.25 per day, but also calls for the renovation of economic institutions and government programs to help end poverty. It promotes the use of government programs to help citizens who are faced with extreme poverty and calls for equality in the access to government programs regardless of gender, race, religion, and disability.<sup>160</sup>

In 2016, 54.5 percent of Afghans lived under the poverty line.

151 Jessie Tu, "UN Criticised for Complying with Taliban's Restriction on Women in Talks," Women's Agenda, July 1, 2024, <https://womensagenda.com.au/latest/un-criticised-for-complying-with-talibans-restriction-on-women-in-talks/>.

152 United Nations Security Council, "Doha Meeting on Afghanistan Provides Critical Opportunity to Discuss Women's Rights, Speaker Tells Security Council | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15740.doc.htm), June 21, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15740.doc.htm>.

153 United Nations Security Council, "Speakers Weigh Prospects for Engagement with Taliban in Afghanistan amid Ongoing Concern over Harsh Repression of Women's Rights | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15541.doc.htm), December 20, 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15541.doc.htm>.

154 UN News, "Afghanistan's Economy Has 'Basically Collapsed': UNDP | UN News," [news.un.org](https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147387), March 7, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147387>.

155 United Nations Security Council, "Sanctions List Materials | Security Council," [Un.org](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1988/materials), 2020, <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1988/materials>.

156 United Nations Security Council, "Security Council Renews for One Year Mandate of Team Monitoring Sanctions against Taliban, with Some Regretting Travel Exemptions Not Extended | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15530.doc.htm), December 14, 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15530.doc.htm>.

157 Wazhma Sadat, "Why Sanctions against the Taliban Aren't Working," Foreign Policy, June 29, 2023, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/06/29/taliban-sanctions-act-us-afghanistan/>.

158 United Nations Security Council, "Security Council Renews for One Year Mandate of Team Monitoring Sanctions against Taliban, with Some Regretting Travel Exemptions Not Extended | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15530.doc.htm), December 14, 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15530.doc.htm>.

159 United Nations Development Goals, "Background on the Goals | United Nations Development Programme," UNDP, 2024, <https://www.undp.org/sdg-accelerator/background-goals>.

160 European Commission, "SDGs | KnowSDGs," [knowsdgs.jrc.ec.europa.eu](https://knowsdgs.jrc.ec.europa.eu), n.d., <https://knowsdgs.jrc.ec.europa.eu/sdg/1>.

Since the Taliban takeover, the percentage of people living on less than a dollar a day has increased to 85 percent.<sup>161</sup> This causes a lack of access to imperative resources, with two-thirds of households being unable to afford food and other necessities.<sup>162</sup> Out of the few women allowed to work in Afghanistan, employed women are approximately 33 percent more likely to earn below the poverty line than men.<sup>163</sup>

SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls aims for the inclusion and equitable treatment of women in various aspects of society. The UN measures countries that are “on track” to achieve SDG 5 based on nine indicators, including protection of gender equality in legal frameworks, the ending of child marriages, the number of women in leadership positions, and more.<sup>164</sup> Most importantly, these goals are aimed at incorporating women fully and equally into society, from the workforce to government to education.

Afghanistan is ranked last out of 177 countries for its inclusion, security, and overall treatment of women.<sup>165</sup> Much of the Taliban’s treatment of women, such as their banning of women having more than a sixth-grade education, is claimed to be from their interpretation of Islamic teachings, called Sharia. The banning of women from the workforce poses a threat to an already failing Afghan economy.<sup>166</sup> With thousands of women losing their jobs in teaching and many healthcare professionals having to leave or halt their studies, Afghanistan is losing personnel in industries essential for the

country’s future.<sup>167</sup> The banning of women from the workforce is a major influence on the increase in rates of child marriages in Afghanistan.<sup>168</sup> Around 28 percent of girls are married before the age of 18, with four percent being married before the age of 15.<sup>169</sup> Women in child marriages are more likely to face domestic abuse later on in their marriage. They are also more likely to have complications when giving birth and face mental health issues such as depression.<sup>170</sup> Afghan women are also more likely to be faced with adversity, with 80 percent of people in need being women and children.<sup>171</sup>

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions works to provide sustainable and fair governmental systems that benefit all citizens. This SDG consists of 12 targets, including ensuring equal justice for all citizens, reducing crime and child labor/abuse, access to equal voting rights, and more. SDG 16 is aimed at creating peaceful and inclusive democratic societies with transparency and accountability.<sup>172</sup>

According to an index by Transparency International that measures corruption around the world, Afghanistan ranks 162nd out of 180 states assessed. Corruption can take many forms. In Afghanistan, most are bribes of some kind, at border checkpoints and other public services.<sup>173</sup> Though local elections have been held in a few small provinces in the country, Afghanistan remains far from establishing a formal democratic government under the Taliban regime.<sup>174</sup> Before the Taliban regime, elections were regularly held in Afghanistan under its

161 United Nations Development Goals, “Approximately 85 Percent of Afghans Live on Less than One Dollar a Day,” UNDP, January 10, 2024, <https://www.undp.org/stories/approximately-85-percent-afghans-live-less-one-dollar-day>.

162 Kaela Malig, “Afghanistan, 2 Years After: Taliban Repression & Humanitarian Crises Intensify,” FRONTLINE, August 15, 2023, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/afghanistan-two-years-taliban-takeover-humanitarian-crises-economy-womens-rights/>.

163 Asian Development Bank, “Afghanistan: Poverty,” [www.adb.org](http://www.adb.org), 2021, <https://www.adb.org/where-we-work/afghanistan/poverty>.

164 United Nations, “Goal 5 Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls,” [sdgs.un.org](https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5) (United Nations, 2024), <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5>.

165 Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, “Afghanistan,” Georgetown Institute of Women Peace and Security, 2024, <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/country/afghanistan/>.

166 United Nations International Children’s Fund, “Depriving Girls of Secondary Education Translates to a Loss of at Least US\$500 Million for Afghan Economy in Last 12 Months,” [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), August 14, 2022, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/depriving-girls-secondary-education-translates-loss-least-us500-million-afghan>.

167 Riazat Butt, “2 Years Ago, the Taliban Banned Girls from School. It’s a Worsening Crisis for All Afghans,” AP News, September 18, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/afghanistan-taliban-high-school-ban-girls-7046b3dbb76ca76d40343db6ba547556>.

168 United Nations International Children’s Fund, “Girls Increasingly at Risk of Child Marriage in Afghanistan,” UNICEF, November 12, 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/girls-increasingly-risk-child-marriage-afghanistan>.

169 Girls Not Brides, “Child Marriage Atlas,” Girls Not Brides, 2024, <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/atlas/afghanistan/>.

170 United Nations International Children’s Fund, “Girls Increasingly at Risk of Child Marriage in Afghanistan,” [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), November 12, 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/girls-increasingly-risk-child-marriage-afghanistan>.

171 International Rescue Committee, “Afghanistan: An Entire Population Pushed into Poverty | International Rescue Committee (IRC),” [www.rescue.org](http://www.rescue.org) (International Rescue Committee, December 22, 2022), <https://www.rescue.org/article/afghanistan-entire-population-pushed-poverty>.

172 United Nations, “Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” [sdgs.un.org](https://sdgs.un.org), 2023, [https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16#targets\\_and\\_indicators](https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16#targets_and_indicators).

173 Akmal Dawi, “Can the Taliban Tackle Corruption in Afghanistan?,” VOA, January 31, 2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/can-the-taliban-tackle-corruption-in-afghanistan-/6942205.html>.

174 Franz J Marty, “The Peculiar Case of Elections under the Taliban,” The Diplomat (The Diplomat, April 26, 2022), <https://thediplomat.com/2022/04/>



US occupation. For those elections, an election commission was established to supervise each election, yet, after the US's withdrawal, the Taliban has called for the dissolution of the commission, saying there is "no need."<sup>175</sup>

## Bloc Analysis

### Points of Division

The issues in Afghanistan are not overlooked by the rest of the world. With the country's popular drug trade and the harboring of several recognized terrorist groups, many countries have raised concerns about the affairs of Afghanistan.<sup>176</sup>

The immediate issues in the country, such as the humanitarian, economic, and drug trafficking crises, are often widely recognized. Other issues, including women's rights, democratic freedoms, and religious oppression are more controversial topics that are often not addressed. What also differs between countries are the responses to these crises.<sup>177</sup> Even on widely recognized issues such as the economic crisis, approaches differ, with countries like France, the United Kingdom, and the United States aiming for deep governmental reform to rebuild the economy, while China and Russia are focused on including the current government to collaborate and revive the economy.

A main point of disagreement between countries in the Security Council has become the recognition of the Taliban as the official government of Afghanistan. Some countries believe since the Taliban has majority control over the country and its law enforcement, they should be formally recognized as Afghanistan's governing authority and be able to enter and equally participate in the international community. Other countries view the Taliban's rise to power as undemocratic and

unfair to the Afghan people, especially its religious minorities and women.<sup>178</sup>

Lack of consensus in these divisions has been key to the current state of Afghanistan. Delegates must properly research which issues their countries recognize, their preferred approaches to addressing those crises, and their reasoning behind them. Use these blocs as a guide and not as a strict interpretation of countries' policies.

### Recognition of the Taliban Bloc

It is important to note that this bloc does not focus only on recognizing the Taliban as the official government of Afghanistan. While certain countries have not formally recognized the Taliban, some have expanded diplomatic ties with the Taliban, have delisted the Taliban from its list of terrorist groups, and so on.

For instance, in January 2024, China formally accepted the credentials of the ambassador of the Taliban to China. And in September 2023 China was the first country to name a new ambassador to Afghanistan since August 2021. Similarly, Russia is one of the few countries that has maintained its embassy in Kabul. In April 2022, Russia handed over the Afghan Embassy in Moscow to the Taliban. Additionally, Russian President, Vladimir Putin while commenting on removing the Taliban from Russia's list of terrorist organizations, also mentioned that Moscow should "build relations" with the group.<sup>179</sup>

Countries in this bloc are often located and have interests in the Central and South Asian region. The internal issues in Afghanistan impact them first-hand. These countries are faced with the growing refugee crisis originating from Afghanistan, and drug trafficking that significantly impacts their citizens.<sup>180</sup> They believe that by recognizing the Taliban and building

the-peculiar-case-of-elections-under-the-taliban/.

175 Al Jazeera, "No Need: Taliban Dissolves Afghanistan Election Commission," [www.aljazeera.com](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/12/25/taliban-dissolves-afghanistan-election-commission), December 25, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/12/25/taliban-dissolves-afghanistan-election-commission>.

176 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System" (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2017), [https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Child-Victims/Handbook\\_on\\_Children\\_Recruited\\_and\\_Exploited\\_by\\_Terrorist\\_and\\_Violent\\_Extremist\\_Groups\\_the\\_Role\\_of\\_the\\_Justice\\_System.E.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Child-Victims/Handbook_on_Children_Recruited_and_Exploited_by_Terrorist_and_Violent_Extremist_Groups_the_Role_of_the_Justice_System.E.pdf).

177 Pavel K. Baev, "Russia and America's Overlapping Legacies in Afghanistan," Brookings, August 2021, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/russia-and-americas-overlapping-legacies-in-afghanistan/>.

178 Brookings, "Recognition and the Taliban," Brookings, September 30, 2022, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/recognition-and-the-taliban-2/>.

179 Abubakar Siddique, "Which Countries Have Relations With The Taliban's Unrecognized Government?" Radio Free Europe, May 30, 2024, <https://www.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-taliban-russia-diplomacy/32972530.html>.

180 International Crisis Group, "The Taliban's Neighbourhood: Regional Diplomacy with Afghanistan | Crisis Group," [www.crisisgroup.org](https://www.crisisgroup.org), January 30, 2024, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/337-talibans-neighbourhood-regional-diplomacy-afghanistan>.

diplomatic ties with the government, they can influence policies that decrease the number of refugees and slow down drug production and trade around the region.<sup>181</sup>

This bloc, like others, aims for greater counterterrorism measures and helping decrease the amount of extremist groups in the country. But, unlike other blocs, they believe that recognizing the Taliban will stabilize the political state of the country enough to discourage opposition to the Taliban and control the growing extremism that comes from the people's growing frustrations. These countries often focus on the incorporation of Afghanistan into the international community, believing that recognizing the Taliban as its official government is the fastest and most efficient way to do so. Yet, they continue to develop a sphere of influence in the country to promote their own interests.<sup>182</sup>

### Anti-Recognition of the Taliban Bloc

Countries in this bloc refuse to recognize the Taliban as the official government of Afghanistan. While many reasons may underline their position, the main argument lies in the disapproval of the non-democratic ascension of power by the Taliban.<sup>183</sup>

Countries in this bloc are often the ones who were a part of and assisted the US's War in Afghanistan. They were involved in the War's mission to dismantle extremist terrorist groups in the region, including the Taliban. During the 20-year occupation of the region, these countries helped establish humanitarian assistance to the region and expand rights throughout the country. With the Taliban's dismantling and banning of such progress in the region, these countries believe the Taliban is responsible for the economic and social collapse

the country faces today.<sup>184</sup>

This bloc is countries who refuse to recognize the Taliban with its current treatment of religious minorities, especially, women.<sup>185</sup> These countries believe that without the Taliban's willingness to expand women's rights and reintroduce them to the workforce, the full potential of the Afghan economy and government will not be realized. They are also frequent contributors to humanitarian aid and missions to help the current crises in Afghanistan.<sup>186</sup> These countries also believe that a recognized Taliban government would legitimize the group's extremist ideology, opening the doors for more terrorist operations by extremist groups. They are also worried recognition would be seen as support for the groups' views and treatment of women<sup>187</sup>.

Instead of recognition, this bloc advocates for a complete restructuring of the Afghan government that promotes democratic values and equality. They believe that through inclusion internal tensions would subside and allow for greater economic reform and organization within the country.<sup>188</sup> Though they aim to address the root of the problem, these countries also continue to contribute to humanitarian aid and focus on helping neighboring countries dealing with the outpour of refugees from Afghanistan.<sup>189</sup>

### Neutral Bloc

This bloc includes countries whose internal affairs are countries that have not made a clear stance on how to approach the issues in Afghanistan. This is because they are often faced with their own humanitarian and economic crises that impede them from helping manage international ones. Likewise, they face no direct threat from the issues in Afghanistan—such as

181 Raisina Debates, "Navigating the Terror Threat: Russia and India in Afghanistan," orfonline.org, June 24, 2024, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/navigating-the-terror-threat-russia-and-india-in-afghanistan>.

182 Vanda Felbab-Brown, "A BRI(Dge) Too Far: The Unfulfilled Promise and Limitations of China's Involvement in Afghanistan," Brookings, June 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/a-bridge-too-far-the-unfulfilled-promise-and-limitations-of-chinas-involvement-in-afghanistan/>.

183 Murtazashvili, Jennifer. "The Collapse of Afghanistan." *Journal of Democracy* 33, no. 1 (January 2022), 40–54.

184 United Nations Security Council, "Security Council Emphasizes That Punitive Restrictions on Women's Rights, Escalating Hunger, Insecurity Taking Devastating Toll in Afghanistan | UN Press," press.un.org, March 8, 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15222.doc.htm>.

185 United Nations Security Council, "Afghanistan's Future Depends on Taliban's Engagement with World, but Restrictions on Women Signal Lack of International Commitments, Briefer Warns Security Council | UN Press," press.un.org, September 27, 2022, <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc15038.doc.htm>.

186 William Byrd, "Afghanistan's Crisis Requires a Coherent, Coordinated International Response," United States Institute of Peace, May 16, 2023, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/05/afghanistans-crisis-requires-coherent-coordinated-international-response>.

187 Adam Leslie, "China's Recognition of the Taliban Sets a Dangerous Precedent," The Strategist, February 7, 2024, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/chinas-recognition-of-the-taliban-sets-a-dangerous-precedent/>.

188 Congressional Research Service, "Afghanistan: Background and U.S. Policy," December 4, 2023, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45122>.

189 United Nations Human Rights Council, "Islamic Republic of Pakistan," Global Focus, 2024, <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/operations/islamic-republic-pakistan>.

drug trafficking and terrorism—that are more important to other blocs.

What separates these countries from others who are facing internal challenges is that the countries in this bloc have severe economic disparities, and are often considered the poorest countries in their respective regions. They also face extreme political instability often in the form of civil wars or internal tensions.<sup>190</sup> Because of their economic strife, they receive humanitarian and foreign aid to help mitigate their extreme poverty and humanitarian crises.<sup>191</sup> As such, they are unable to contribute to missions that require fiscal or military contributions of any kind.

These countries are often removed from the consequences of the instability in Afghanistan. This might be because of a lack of proximity to the country or other issues in the country that are more pressing. Either way, these countries do not have a stance or specific approach to the situation in Afghanistan and are more focused on their challenges.

## Committee Mission

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was created in 1946 and is considered one of the five main organs of the United Nations. The UNSC consists of 15 members. Including five permanent members (United States, United Kingdom, France, China, and Russia), and 10 non-permanent members who hold their seats for two-year terms, appointed by the General Assembly to equally reflect different regions of the world.<sup>192</sup> Together, these members are assigned to protect global peace and security.<sup>193</sup>

There are many ways in which the Security Council can maintain international peace. First, the UNSC must determine where there are possible threats to peace and call on involved parties to come to a peaceful conclusion to the conflict. More often than not, the UNSC sends neutral negotiators, or envoys, to help with peace talks. The UNSC, unlike any other UN committee, has the power to enforce its resolutions. Therefore, if peace talks do not lead to the end of a conflict, the Council can impose sanctions on the parties in question and mobilize UN troops when deemed necessary.<sup>194</sup> Ultimately, the powers of the UNSC are primarily used to influence countries to comply with international law and to maintain the proper enforcement of human rights.

Concerning Afghanistan, the UNSC created the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in 2002. It aims to assist the country through humanitarian efforts and providing reports on the situation in the region.<sup>195</sup> UNAMA is responsible for the coordination of humanitarian aid, supporting people faced with discrimination, and reporting the status of the government and law enforcement in the region.<sup>196</sup> They have also been key in imposing several sanctions on Taliban officials and have worked to increase counterterrorism measures in Afghanistan.<sup>197</sup> The UNSC meets every three months to discuss the situation in Afghanistan and bring light to new developments in the region.<sup>198</sup>

190 Kingsley Ighobor, “As a UN Security Council Member, Sierra Leone Will Promote Peace, Security and Good Governance in Africa,” *Africa Renewal*, June 16, 2023, <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/may-2023/un-security-council-member-sierra-leone-will-promote-peace-security-and-good>.

191 United Nations Population Fund, “Guyana Humanitarian Emergency,” [www.unfpa.org](http://www.unfpa.org), 2023, <https://www.unfpa.org/data/emergencies/guyana-humanitarian-emergency>.

192 Encyclopedia Britannica, “United Nations Security Council | History & Members,” in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations-Security-Council>.

193 Council on Foreign Relations, “The UN Security Council,” Council on Foreign Relations, February 28, 2023, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/un-security-council>.

194 United Nations Security Council, “What Is the Security Council? | Security Council,” [Un.org](http://un.org), 2020, <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/what-security-council>.

195 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, “Mission Statement,” UNAMA, May 4, 2017, <https://unama.unmissions.org/mission-statement>.

196 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, “Activities,” UNAMA, September 1, 2014, <https://unama.unmissions.org/activities>.

197 United Nations Security Council, “Security Council Renews for One Year Mandate of Team Monitoring Sanctions against Taliban, with Some Regretting Travel Exemptions Not Extended | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases,” [press.un.org](http://press.un.org), December 14, 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15530.doc.htm>.

198 United Nations Security Council, “Security Council Extends Mandate of United Nations Mission in Afghanistan, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2727 (2024) | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases,” [press.un.org](http://press.un.org), March 14, 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15628.doc.htm>.

## 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. Should the international community recognize the Nagorno-Karabakh region as a part of Azerbaijan, or should Armenia's historical claims be taken into account?
2. How should Russia's role as a peacekeeper in the region be evaluated in light of its involvement in ceasefires and conflicts elsewhere (i.e. Ukraine)?
3. Is the Minsk Group still a viable mediator for future peace talks, or should a new framework for negotiation be developed?
4. How might the potential exit of Armenia from the CSTO impact the geopolitical balance in the South Caucasus region?
5. How do the interests of Azerbaijani-supporting countries (ie; Turkey, Israel) and Armenian-supporting countries (ie; USA, EU) influence the international response to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict?
6. Would an independent Artsakh region be a solution to produce peace? How would that look on the international scene (ie; separatism in different countries)?
7. What would be appropriate measures in this conflict for your country and how can the UNSC realize these measures?

### Topic B

1. In what ways is Afghanistan undemocratic? Does it pose a security threat to other countries, and if so, how?
2. Is your country willing to recognize a Taliban government and why? How do their historical ties with Afghanistan affect their stance?
3. Would the reintegration of Afghanistan into the global economy and trade help? Would your country's economy benefit their international integration?
4. What alternatives are there to economic sanctions on the Taliban that might alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan without bolstering the regime's power?
5. What role does the international community, including the United Nations, play in mediating the conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan?
6. How has Afghanistan's isolation from the international community affected its ability to address its internal crises, including the refugee situation, and economic collapse?
7. How could peace be fostered between Afghanistan and Pakistan?

## Important Documents

### Topic A

- Karakoc, Ercan. "A Brief Overview on Karabakh history from Past to Today." *Journal of Human Sciences*, no. 2 (May 2011): <https://www.j-humansciences.com/ojs/index.php/IJHS/article/view/2026>
- Karlinsky, Ariel, and Orsola Torrisi. "The Casualties of War: An Excess Mortality Estimate of Lives Lost in the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict." *Population research and policy review*, 2023. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10171164/>.
- "The Four-Day War in Nagorno-Karabakh." OSW Centre for Eastern Studies, April 19, 2018. <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2016-04-06/four-day-war-nagorno-karabakh>.
- Yemelianova, Galina. "The De Facto State of Nagorno-Karabakh: Historical and Geopolitical Perspectives". *Europe-Asia Studies*, no. 8 (October 2023): 1336-1359. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/09668136.2023.2214708?needAccess=true>

### Topic B

- Bloch, Hannah. "A Look at Afghanistan's 40 Years of Crisis — from the Soviet War to Taliban Recapture." NPR.org. National Public Radio, August 19, 2021. <https://www.npr.org/2021/08/19/1028472005/afghanistan-conflict-timeline>.
- Brookings. "Recognition and the Taliban." Brookings, September 30, 2022. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/recognition-and-the-taliban-2/>.
- Byrd, William. "Afghanistan's Crisis Requires a Coherent, Coordinated International Response." United States Institute of Peace, May 16, 2023. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/05/afghanistans-crisis-requires-coherent-coordinated-international-response>.
- United Nations International Children's Fund. "Depriving Girls of Secondary Education Translates to a Loss of at least US\$500 Million for Afghan Economy in Last 12 Months." [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), August 14, 2022. <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/depriving-girls-secondary-education-translates-loss-least-us500-million-afghan>.

## Works Cited

### Topic A

#### UN Sources

- Conflict-related civilian casualties in Ukraine. Accessed August 14, 2024. [https://ukraine.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/Conflict-related civilian casualties as of 31 December 2021/](https://ukraine.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/Conflict-related%20civilian%20casualties%20as%20of%2031%20December%202021.pdf).
- Intense fighting in Eastern Ukraine “extremely alarming”, says Pillay, as UN releases New report | ohchr. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2014/07/intense-fighting-eastern-ukraine-extremely-alarming-says-pillay-un-releases>.
- Two-year update. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/two-year-update-protection-civilians-impact-hostilities-civilians-24.pdf>.
- UN Karabakh Mission told ‘sudden’ exodus means as few as 50 ethnic Armenians may remain | UN news. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1141782>.
- UN Karabakh Mission told ‘sudden’ exodus means as few as 50 ethnic Armenians may remain | UN news. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1141782>.
- “Refugee Data Finder.” UNHCR. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=QBtmr4>
- “SDG Indicators - SDG Indicators.” United Nations. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>.
- “Sustainable Development Goals in Armenia.” United Nations. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://armenia.un.org/en/sdgs/>.
- “Sustainable Development Goals in Azerbaijan.” United Nations. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://azerbaijan.un.org/en/sdgs/>.
- “The 17 Goals | Sustainable Development.” United Nations. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/>.
- “Ukraine.” Front page, August 12, 2024. <https://www.unocha.org/ukraine>.
- “UN Karabakh Mission Told ‘sudden’ Exodus Means as Few as 50 Ethnic Armenians May Remain | UN News.” United Nations. Accessed July 20, 2024. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1141782/>.
- “UN Team Completes Mission to Karabakh in Azerbaijan.” United Nations. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://azerbaijan.un.org/en/248051-un-team-completes-mission-karabakh>.
- “United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20 .. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.” United Nations. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/rio20/>.
- “United Nations Millennium Development Goals.” United Nations. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.
- “Who Armenia Refugee Health Response, 6 Months on, Critical Health Needs Continue.” World Health Organization. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.who.int/europe/news-room/spotlight/whos-armenia-refugee-health-response-6-months-on-critical-health-needs-continue>.

#### Non-UN Sources

- Advanced Russian Missiles ‘Deployed In Armenia,’ June 3, 2013. <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/25005647.html>.
- Al Jazeera. “Fighting Erupts between Armenia, Azerbaijan over Disputed Region.” Al Jazeera, September 27, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/9/27/heavy-fighting-erupts-in-disputed-nagorno-karabakh-region>.
- Al Jazeera. “Russian Peacekeepers Start Withdrawal from Nagorno-Karabakh.” Al Jazeera, April 17, 2024. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/4/17/russian-peacekeepers-start-withdrawal-from-azerbaijans-nagorno-karabakh>.
- Amirkhanyan, Zhirayr. “A Failure to Innovate: The Second Nagorno-Karabakh War.” *Parameters* 52, no. 1 (2022): 119-134, doi:

10.55540/0031-1723.3133

- Avetisyan, Ani. "Apparent Inaction Gives Rise to Criticism of Csto in Armenia." OC Media, July 9, 2021. <https://oc-media.org/apparent-inaction-gives-rise-to-criticism-of-csto-in-armenia/>.
- Azerbaijan provides update on weapons, ammunition confiscated in Karabakh. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://news.az/news/azerbaijan-provides-update-on-weapons-ammunition-confiscated-in-garabagh-1>.
- Beglaryan, Ashot, "The population of Nagorno-Karabakh for a year. Union of Armenians of Russia - Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. Excursion into history", Losevskaya, <https://losevskaya.ru/en/zdorove/chislennost-naseleniya-nagornogo-karabaha-nagod-soyuz-armyan.html>
- Brown, Cynthia and Farhad Karim. Communal Violence and Human Rights. Human Rights Watch, 1995. [https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954\\_405796](https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/#P954_405796)
- Central Intelligence Agency. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/ukraine/>.
- Central Intelligence Agency. Accessed July 20, 2024. <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/armenia/>.
- Clashes resume on Armenian-azerbaijani border - The Washington Post. Accessed July 21, 2024. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/clashes-resume-on-armenian-azerbaijani-border/2020/07/16/7c858fa6-c750-11ea-a825-8722004e4150\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/clashes-resume-on-armenian-azerbaijani-border/2020/07/16/7c858fa6-c750-11ea-a825-8722004e4150_story.html).
- Constitution. Accessed July 21, 2024. <https://www.marxists.org/history/ussr/government/constitution/1977/constitution-ussr-1977.pdf>.
- Demourian, Avet, and Gaiane Yenokian. "Over Half of Nagorno-Karabakh's Population Flees as the Separatist Government Says It Will Dissolve." AP News, September 28, 2023. <https://apnews.com/article/nagorno-karabakh-azerbaijan-armenia-separatist-government-689e9e437f60a92eaca2523d57bc3d42>.
- Demourian, Avet. "Armenian Leader Announces Plan to Leave Russia-Dominated Security Alliance as Ties with Moscow Sour." AP News, June 13, 2024. <https://apnews.com/article/armenia-russia-csto-security-alliance-2968d29f8fe97a1be8d1a952a1d2ebb8>.
- Foreign Assistance: Agencies Should Take Steps to Improve Reporting on Assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan | U.S. GAO. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-22-104619>.
- Fornusek, Martin. "Pereiaslav, the Treaty That Started Modern Russo-Ukrainian History." The Kyiv Independent, May 14, 2024. <https://kyivindependent.com/pereiaslav-council/>.
- In Nagorno-Karabakh, drones gave Azerbaijan huge advantage and showed future of warfare - The Washington Post. Accessed August 14, 2024. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/nagorno-karabakh-drones-azerbaijan-armenia/2020/11/11/441bcbd2-193d-11eb-8bda-814ca56e138b\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/nagorno-karabakh-drones-azerbaijan-armenia/2020/11/11/441bcbd2-193d-11eb-8bda-814ca56e138b_story.html).
- Isgenderli, Anar. Realities of Azerbaijan. USA: Xlibris Corporation, 2011.
- Javānshīr Qarābāghī, Jamāl, George A. Bournoutian, and Adigözāl Beg. Two chronicles on the history of Karabagh: Mirza Jamal Javanshir's tarikh-e Karabagh and Mirza Adigözāl Beg's karabagh-name. Costa Mesa, California: Mazda, 2004.
- Karakoc, Ercan. "A Brief Overview on Karabakh history from Past to Today." Journal of Human Sciences, no. 2 (May 2011): <https://www.j-humansciences.com/ojs/index.php/IJHS/article/view/2026>
- Karlinsky, Ariel, and Orsola Torrissi. "The Casualties of War: An Excess Mortality Estimate of Lives Lost in the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict." Population research and policy review, 2023. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10171164/>.
- Krüger, Heiko. The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Legal Analysis. Berlin, Germany: Springer, 2010.
- Lister, Tim, Gianluca Mezzofiore, Christian Edwards, Anna Chernova, and Nick Paton Walsh. "Azerbaijan Launches Operation against Armenian Forces in Nagorno-Karabakh." CNN, September 20, 2023. <https://www.cnn.com/2023/09/19/asia/armenia-azerbaijan-nagorno-karabakh-bombardment-intl/index.html>.

- Little, Alex, Aaron Sobczak, Gabe Murphy, Anatol Lieven, Paul R. Pillar, Muhammad Sahimi, Ali Rizk, et al. "Ending US Military Assistance to Azerbaijan Immediately." Responsible Statecraft, November 7, 2023. <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/armenia-azerbaijan/>.
- Malynovska, Olena. "Caught between East and West, Ukraine Struggles with Its Migration Policy." migrationpolicy.org, September 21, 2021. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/caught-between-east-and-west-ukraine-struggles-its-migration-policy>.
- McLean, Assistant Professor John. "Western Civilization." Lumen. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/atd-herkimer-westerncivilization/chapter/vladimir-i-and-christianization/>.
- Minsk Group proposal ('stepbystep deal'). Accessed July 21, 2024. <https://www.legal-tools.org/doc/8760bb/pdf/>.
- Nato. "Relations with Armenia." NATO, May 21, 2024. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_48893.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_48893.htm).
- Nato. "Relations with Azerbaijan." NATO, June 19, 2024. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_49111.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49111.htm).
- Newsam. "Azerbaijan Buys Israeli Weapons, but Is Very Cautious." RSS, March 29, 2019. <https://news.am/eng/news/504144.html>.
- Origins & history of Ukraine. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://ukraine.ua/explore/origins-history-of-ukraine/>.
- Orlova, Alisa. "Russia Seeks to Invalidate 1954 Transfer of Crimea to Ukraine." Kyiv Post, March 12, 2024. <https://www.kyivpost.com/post/29395>.
- Poghosyan, Lucy. "The Maragha Massacre: The Other Face of the Coin in the Karabakh War." The Armenian Weekly, April 10, 2020. <https://armenianweekly.com/2020/04/10/the-maragha-massacre-the-other-face-of-the-coin-in-the-karabakh-war/>.
- Relations between Türkiye and Azerbaijan / republic of türkiye ministry of foreign affairs. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkiye-and-azerbaijan.en.mfa>.
- Rfe/rl. "Pashinian Says Armenia Is Ready to Recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as Part of Azerbaijan under Certain Conditions." RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, May 22, 2023. <https://www.rferl.org/a/armenia-pashinian-recognize-karabakh-azerbaijani-territory/32422965.html>.
- Sanamyan, Emil. "On Origins of Geographic Term 'Karabakh.'" USC Institute of Armenian Studies, June 21, 2020. <https://armenian.usc.edu/on-origins-of-geographic-term-karabakh/>.
- Sanamyan, Emil. "On Origins of the 'Caucasus Region.'" USC Institute of Armenian Studies, June 21, 2020. <https://armenian.usc.edu/on-origins-of-the-caucasus-region/>.
- sk2247. "The CSTO: A Lifeless, Shambling 'Alliance': Gjia." Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, March 14, 2024. <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2024/03/04/the-collective-security-treaty-organization-a-lifeless-shambling-alliance/>.
- Subtelny, Orest. *Ukraine: A History* - Orest Subtelny. Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 2012.
- Tekingunduz, Alican. "31 Years on, Horrors of Khojaly Massacre Still Haunt Azerbaijanis." TRT World - Breaking News, Live Coverage, Opinions and Videos, February 24, 2023. <https://www.trtworld.com/asia/31-years-on-horrors-of-khojaly-massacre-still-haunt-azerbaijanis-65623>.
- The four-Day War has diminished the chances of ... - IFSH. Accessed July 21, 2024. [https://ifsh.de/file/publication/OSCE\\_Yearbook\\_en/2016/Schmidt-en.pdf](https://ifsh.de/file/publication/OSCE_Yearbook_en/2016/Schmidt-en.pdf).
- The Minsk Group couldn't end Azerbaijan and Armenia's Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Accessed July 21, 2024. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/07/23/armenia-azerbaijan-nagorno-karabakh-osce-minsk-group-meaningless/>.
- Treaty of Turkmenchay (1828). Accessed July 21, 2024. [https://mfa.gov.az/files/shares/Treaty of Turkmenchay.pdf](https://mfa.gov.az/files/shares/Treaty%20of%20Turkmenchay.pdf).
- Ukraine's revolution: Making sense of a year of Chaos - BBC News. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30131108>.
- United States holocaust memorial museum. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the>



armenian-genocide-1915-16-in-depth.

- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Accessed July 20, 2024. <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-armenian-genocide-1915-16-overview>.
- Wires, News. "Azerbaijan Closes Only Road Linking Breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh Region to Armenia." France 24, July 11, 2023. <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20230711-azerbaijan-closes-only-road-linking-breakaway-nagorno-karabakh-region-to-armenia>.
- Wright, John F. R., Suzanne Goldenberg, and Richard N. Schofield. *Transcaucasian boundaries* edited by John F.R. Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg, Richard Schofield. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Yemelianova, Galina. "The De Facto State of Nagorno-Karabakh: Historical and Geopolitical Perspectives". *Europe-Asia Studies*, no. 8 (October 2023): 1336-1359. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/09668136.2023.2214708?needAccess=true>
- "A 5-Minute Guide to Understanding Ukraine's Euromaidan Protests." Open Society Foundations. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/understanding-ukraines-euromaidan-protests>.
- "Armenia Emergency Six-Month Impact Report (September 2023 - March 2024) - Armenia." ReliefWeb, April 8, 2024. <https://reliefweb.int/report/armenia/armenia-emergency-six-month-impact-report-september-2023-march-2024>.
- "Armenia Refugee Response Plan (October 2023 – March 2024) - Armenia." ReliefWeb, October 7, 2023. <https://reliefweb.int/report/armenia/armenia-refugee-response-plan-october-2023-march-2024>.
- "Armenia, Azerbaijan Agree to a Cease-Fire : Caucasus: Moscow Brokers Truce in Former Soviet Union's Longest-Running Conflict. but Fighting Continues." Los Angeles Times, May 17, 1994. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1994-05-17-mn-58811-story.html>.
- "Azerbaijan Makes Massive Israeli Weapons Purchase -- but Not Because of Iran." Eurasianet. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://eurasianet.org/azerbaijan-makes-massive-israeli-weapons-purchase-but-not-because-of-iran>.
- "Azerbaijan Says Peace Deal with Armenia 'impossible' While Yerevan's Constitution Is Unchanged." Anadolu Ajansı. Accessed July 20, 2024. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/azerbaijan-says-peace-deal-with-armenia-impossible-while-yerevans-constitution-is-unchanged/3242606>.
- "Azerbaijan to Boost Defense Production with Turkish Collaboration, Defense Minister Says." Anadolu Ajansı. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/azerbaijan-to-boost-defense-production-with-turkish-collaboration-defense-minister-says/3259217>.
- "Azerbaijan: Blockade of Lachin Corridor Putting Thousands of Lives in Peril Must Be Immediately Lifted." Amnesty International, March 6, 2023. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/02/azerbaijan-blockade-of-lachin-corridor-putting-thousands-of-lives-in-peril-must-be-immediately-lifted/>.
- "Crimea Crisis: Russian President Putin's Speech Annotated." BBC News, March 19, 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26652058>.
- "European Commission Official Affirms Armenia's Right to Seek EU Membership." Caucasus Watch, August 13, 2024. <https://caucasuswatch.de/en/news/european-commission-official-affirms-armenias-right-to-seek-eu-membership.html>.
- "European Union, United States Woo Armenia with Economic Assistance Package." Eurasianet. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://eurasianet.org/european-union-united-states-woo-armenia-with-economic-assistance-package>.
- "Libguides: The War in Ukraine: Crimea and the Donbas." Crimea and the Donbas - The War in Ukraine - LibGuides at University of Connecticut. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://guides.lib.uconn.edu/ukraine/crimea-donbas>.
- "Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh): Historical and Geographical Perspectives." Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh): Historical and Geographical Perspectives. Accessed July 20, 2024.
- "Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed July 20, 2024. <https://www.cfr>

org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/nagorno-karabakh-conflict.

- “National Monitoring System Report on the Situation of Internally Displaced Persons - March 2020 - Ukraine.” ReliefWeb, January 21, 2021. <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/national-monitoring-system-report-situation-internally-displaced-persons-march-2020>.
- “Research Guides: The Caucasus: Cartographic Resources in the Library of Congress: An Abbreviated History of Maps of the Caucasus.” Library of Congress. Accessed July 20, 2024. <https://guides.loc.gov/caucasus-maps/contents-history>.
- “Russia Begins Withdrawing Peacekeeping Forces from Karabakh, Now under Full Azerbaijan Control.” AP News, April 23, 2024. <https://apnews.com/article/russia-azerbaijan-withdrawal-f60ed4e9ca5e78c071b77a2fa57cd765>.
- “The Armenian Genocide (1915-16): In Depth.” United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Accessed July 20, 2024. <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-armenian-genocide-1915-16-in-depth>.
- “The Birth of Christianity in Ukrainian Lands: Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.” Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://ugcc.ua/en/church/history/the-birth-of-christianity-in-ukraine/>.
- “The Four-Day War in Nagorno-Karabakh.” OSW Centre for Eastern Studies, April 19, 2018. <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2016-04-06/four-day-war-nagorno-karabakh>.
- “Top European Rights Court Says Russia Responsible for Breaching Rights in Crimea after 2014 Takeover.” AP News, June 25, 2024. <https://apnews.com/article/ukraine-russia-crimea-rights-court-strasbourg-tatars-da75bca8b50d631fb59b102ed7a8c147>.
- “Treaty of Turkmenchay 1828.” Museums - The World Museums Network. Accessed July 20, 2024. <https://museu.ms/article/details/126226>.
- “U.S. Enhances Support for Armenia at the U.S.-EU High-Level Meeting: Press Release: Europe and Eurasia.” U.S. Agency for International Development, April 22, 2024. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/apr-05-2024-us-enhances-support-armenia-us-eu-high-level-meeting>.
- “Why Did Russia Give Away Crimea Sixty Years Ago?” Wilson Center. Accessed August 14, 2024. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/why-did-russia-give-away-crimea-sixty-years-ago>.

## Topic B

### UN Sources

- United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, “Activities,” UNAMA, September 1, 2014, <https://unama.unmissions.org/activities>.
- United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. “About.” UNAMA, May 7, 2014. <https://unama.unmissions.org/about>.
- United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. “Mission Statement.” UNAMA, May 4, 2017. <https://unama.unmissions.org/mission-statement>.
- United Nations Development Goals. “Background on the Goals | United Nations Development Programme.” UNDP, 2024. <https://www.undp.org/sdg-accelerator/background-goals>.
- United Nations Development Goals. “Approximately 85 Percent of Afghans Live on Less than One Dollar a Day.” UNDP, January 10, 2024. <https://www.undp.org/stories/approximately-85-percent-afghans-live-less-one-dollar-day>.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “Islamic Republic of Pakistan.” Global Focus, 2024. <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/operations/islamic-republic-pakistan>.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “Islamic Republic of Pakistan.” Global Focus, 2024. <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/operations/islamic-republic-pakistan>.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “Proof of Registration Card (PoR).” UNHCR Pakistan, n.d. <https://help.unhcr.org/pakistan/proof-of-registration-card-por/>.

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “The 1951 Refugee Convention.” UNHCR US, n.d. <https://www.unhcr.org/us/about-unhcr/who-we-are/1951-refugee-convention>.
- United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund. “The Afghanistan Multidimensional Poverty Index (A-MPI),” 2017. <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/sites/unicef.org.afghanistan/files/2019-03/MPI%20key%20points.pdf>.
- United Nations International Children’s Fund. “Depriving Girls of Secondary Education Translates to a Loss of at Least US\$500 Million for Afghan Economy in Last 12 Months.” [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), August 14, 2022. <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/depriving-girls-secondary-education-translates-loss-least-us500-million-afghan>.
- United Nations International Children’s Fund. “Flash Floods in Afghanistan Posing Urgent and Persistent Threat to Children.” [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), June 2024. <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/press-releases/flash-floods-afghanistan-posing-urgent-and-persistent-threat-children>.
- United Nations International Children’s Fund. “Girls Increasingly at Risk of Child Marriage in Afghanistan.” [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), November 12, 2021. <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/girls-increasingly-risk-child-marriage-afghanistan>.
- United Nations News. “A Knowledge-Based Approach to Tackling Afghanistan’s Drug Abuse Crisis | UN News.” [news.un.org](http://news.un.org), June 25, 2023. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/06/1138067>.
- United Nations News. “Afghanistan’s Economy Has ‘Basically Collapsed’: UNDP | UN News.” [news.un.org](http://news.un.org), March 7, 2024. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147387>.
- United Nations News. “Afghanistan’s Future Depends on Taliban’s Engagement with World, but Restrictions on Women Signal Lack of International Commitments, Briefer Warns Security Council | UN Press.” [press.un.org](http://press.un.org), September 27, 2022. <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc15038.doc.htm>.
- United Nations News. “Pakistan Urged to Halt Afghan Deportations to Avoid ‘Human Rights Catastrophe’ | UN News.” [news.un.org](http://news.un.org), October 27, 2023. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1142887>.
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. “Afghanistan.” OCHA, June 19, 2019. <https://www.unocha.org/afghanistan>.
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. “Population | Humanitarian Action.” Humanitarian Action, 2024. <https://humanitarianaction.info/plan/1185/population#page-title>.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. “2020 World Drug Report.” United Nations, April 2020. [https://wdr.unodc.org/wdr2020/field/WDR20\\_Booklet\\_3.pdf](https://wdr.unodc.org/wdr2020/field/WDR20_Booklet_3.pdf).
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. “Afghanistan Opium Cultivation in 2023 Declined 95 per Cent Following Drug Ban: New UNODC Survey.” United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime, November 5, 2023. [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2023/November/afghanistan-opium-cultivation-in-2023-declined-95-per-cent-following-drug-ban\\_-new-unodc-survey.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2023/November/afghanistan-opium-cultivation-in-2023-declined-95-per-cent-following-drug-ban_-new-unodc-survey.html).
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. “Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System.” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2017. [https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Child-Victims/Handbook\\_on\\_Children\\_Recruited\\_and\\_Exploited\\_by\\_Terrorist\\_and\\_Violent\\_Extremist\\_Groups\\_the\\_Role\\_of\\_the\\_Justice\\_System.E.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Child-Victims/Handbook_on_Children_Recruited_and_Exploited_by_Terrorist_and_Violent_Extremist_Groups_the_Role_of_the_Justice_System.E.pdf).
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. “Organized Crime Module 1 Key Issues: Defining Organized Crime.” [Unodc.org](http://unodc.org), 2019. <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/organized-crime/module-1/key-issues/defining-organized-crime.html>.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. “UNODC Reports Major and Growing Drug Abuse in Afghanistan.” United Nations: Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2010/June/unodc-reports-major-and-growing-drug-abuse-in-afghanistan.html>.
- United Nations Population Fund. “Guyana Humanitarian Emergency.” [www.unfpa.org](http://www.unfpa.org), 2023. <https://www.unfpa.org/data/emergencies/guyana-humanitarian-emergency>.

- United Nations Security Council. “What Is the Security Council?” 2020. <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/current-members>
- United Nations Security Council. “What Is the Security Council?” United Nations Official Website. Security Council. Accessed September 21, 2024. <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/what-security-council>.
- United Nations Security Council. Report 63\*. Report on the threat of ISIL. S/2022/64\*. January 28, 2022. <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n22/231/80/pdf/n2223180.pdf?token=RqSltiGiSnQC3pt3fw&fe=true>.
- United Nations Security Council. Resolution 1378. Situation in Afghanistan. S/RES/1378. November 14, 2001. <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1378>.
- United Nations Security Council. Resolution 1386. Creation of the International Security Assistance Force. S/RES/1386. December 20, 2001. <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1386>.
- United Nations Security Council. Resolution 1510. Mission in Afghanistan. S/RES/1510. October 13, 2003. [https://web.archive.org/web/20101009021301/http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/mandate/unscr/resolution\\_1510.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20101009021301/http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/mandate/unscr/resolution_1510.pdf).
- United Nations Security Council. Resolution 2001/1154. Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan. S/RES/1378. December 5, 2001. [https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/AF\\_011205\\_AgreementProvisionalArrangementsinAfghanistan%28en%29.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/AF_011205_AgreementProvisionalArrangementsinAfghanistan%28en%29.pdf).
- United Nations Security Council. Resolution 678. A/RES/678/2. (Nov. 29, 1990). <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Chap%2VII%2SRES%26nbsp;678.pdf>
- United Nations Security Council. “Doha Meeting on Afghanistan Provides Critical Opportunity to Discuss Women’s Rights, Speaker Tells Security Council | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15740.doc.htm), June 21, 2024. <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15740.doc.htm>.
- United Nations Security Council. “Sanctions List Materials | Security Council.” [Un.org](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1988/materials), 2020. <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1988/materials>.
- United Nations Security Council. “Security Council Emphasizes That Punitive Restrictions on Women’s Rights, Escalating Hunger, Insecurity Taking Devastating Toll in Afghanistan | UN Press.” [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15222.doc.htm), March 8, 2023. <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15222.doc.htm>.
- United Nations Security Council. “Security Council Extends Mandate of United Nations Mission in Afghanistan, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2727 (2024) | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15628.doc.htm), March 14, 2024. <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15628.doc.htm>.
- United Nations Security Council. “Security Council Extends Mandate of United Nations Mission in Afghanistan, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2727 (2024) | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15628.doc.htm), March 15, 2024. <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15628.doc.htm>.
- United Nations Security Council. “Security Council Renews for One Year Mandate of Team Monitoring Sanctions against Taliban, with Some Regretting Travel Exemptions Not Extended | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15530.doc.htm), December 14, 2023. <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15530.doc.htm>.
- United Nations Security Council. “Security Council Renews for One Year Mandate of Team Monitoring Sanctions against Taliban, with Some Regretting Travel Exemptions Not Extended | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15530.doc.htm), December 14, 2023. <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15530.doc.htm>.
- United Nations Security Council. “Speakers Weigh Prospects for Engagement with Taliban in Afghanistan amid Ongoing Concern over Harsh Repression of Women’s Rights | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” [press.un.org](https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15541.doc.htm), December 20, 2023. <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15541.doc.htm>.
- United Nations Security Council. “What Is the Security Council? | Security Council.” [Un.org](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/what-security-council), 2020. <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/what-security-council>.

- United Nations Security Council. "Wrestling with a Humanitarian Dilemma in Afghanistan." United States Institute of Peace, January 26, 2023. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/01/wrestling-humanitarian-dilemma-afghanistan>.
- United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). "Cambodia - UNTAC." United Nations Completed Peacekeeping Operations. Accessed October 3, 2024. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/untacbackgr1.html/>.
- United Nations. "FAQ Security Council." Accessed September 21, 2024. <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/faq>.
- United Nations. "Maintain International Peace and Security." Accessed September 21, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/our-work/maintain-international-peace-and-security>.
- United Nations. "Peace & Security Data Hub." Accessed September 29, 2024. <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DPPA-SCVETOES>.
- United Nations. "Resolutions Adopted by the Security Council in 2024 Security Council." Accessed September 21, 2024. <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/resolutions-adopted-security-council-2024/>.
- United Nations. "Security Council." Accessed September 21, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/security-council>.
- United Nations. "Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs." [sdgs.un.org](https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16#targets_and_indicators), 2023. [https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16#targets\\_and\\_indicators](https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16#targets_and_indicators).
- United Nations. "Goal 5 Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls." [sdgs.un.org](https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5). United Nations, 2024. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5>.

### **Non-UN Sources:**

- Afghanaid. "The Climate Crisis in Afghanistan: A Humanitarian Emergency." Afghanaid, April 22, 2024. <https://www.afghanaid.org.uk/news/the-climate-crisis-in-afghanistan-a-humanitarian-emergency>.
- Afghanistan International. "Religious Minorities Face Harassment in Afghanistan, Reports USCIRF." Afghanistan International, May 2024. <https://www.afintl.com/en/202405025654>.
- Agence France Presse. "UN Says 34 Million Afghans in Poverty under Taliban Rule." [www.barrons.com](https://www.barrons.com), April 2023. <https://www.barrons.com/news/34-million-afghans-in-poverty-under-taliban-rule-un-1abfa801>.
- Al Jazeera. "'No Need': Taliban Dissolves Afghanistan Election Commission." [www.aljazeera.com](https://www.aljazeera.com), December 25, 2021. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/12/25/taliban-dissolves-afghanistan-election-commission>.
- Amnesty International. "Afghanistan: The Taliban's War on Women: The Crime against Humanity of Gender Persecution in Afghanistan." Amnesty International, May 25, 2023. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa11/6789/2023/en/>.
- Amnesty International. "Everything You Need to Know about Human Rights in Afghanistan 2020." Amnesty International, 2022. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/asia-and-the-pacific/south-asia/afghanistan/report-afghanistan/>.
- Amnesty International. "Human Rights in Afghanistan." Amnesty International, n.d. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/asia-and-the-pacific/south-asia/afghanistan/report-afghanistan/>.
- Amstutz, J. Bruce. Afghanistan : The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation. Internet Archive, 1994. [https://archive.org/details/bub\\_gb\\_RUSNyMH1aFQC](https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_RUSNyMH1aFQC).
- Anwar, Sohail, and Muhammad Hassan. "AFGHAN REFUGEES: IMPLICATIONS ON PAKISTAN." *Journal of Int'L Affairs* 4 (2021). <https://www.pjia.com.pk/index.php/pjia/article/download/226/171>.
- Asian Development Bank. "Afghanistan: Poverty." [www.adb.org](https://www.adb.org), 2021. <https://www.adb.org/where-we-work/afghanistan/poverty>.
- Austin, Lloyd. "Message to the Force - One Year since the Conclusion of the Afghanistan War." U.S. Department of Defense, August 30, 2022. <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3144082/message-to-the-force-one-year-since-the-conclusion-of-the-afghanistan-war/>.
- Azadi, Radio. "Taliban Bans Books from Minority Muslim Sects in Private University Libraries." RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty,

- December 2023. <https://www.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-taliban-religious-minorities/32743636.html>.
- Baev, Pavel K. "Russia and America's Overlapping Legacies in Afghanistan." Brookings, August 2021. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/russia-and-americas-overlapping-legacies-in-afghanistan/>.
- Balkhi, Mirwais. "Afghanistan's Necessary Shift in Ethnic Narratives: From Dominance to Dialogue | Wilson Center." [www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org), March 2023. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/afghanistans-necessary-shift-ethnic-narratives-dominance-dialogue>.
- Barber, Rebecca. "The U.N. General Assembly's Veto Initiative Turns One. Is It Working?" Just Security. Last modified April 26, 2023. <https://www.justsecurity.org/86140/the-u-n-general-assemblys-veto-initiative-turns-one-is-it-working/>.
- Bartlett, Jason. "Sanctions by the Numbers: Spotlight on Afghanistan." [www.cnas.org](http://www.cnas.org), October 28, 2021. <https://www.cnas.org/publications/reports/sanctions-by-the-numbers-afghanistan>.
- Better World Campaign. "UN Peacekeeping." Accessed September 21, 2024. <https://betterworldcampaign.org/un-peacekeeping>.
- Blinken, Antony. "22nd Anniversary of the September 11, 2001 Attacks." United States Department of State, September 11, 2023. <https://www.state.gov/22nd-anniversary-of-the-september-11-2001-attacks/>.
- Bloch, Hannah. "A Look at Afghanistan's 40 Years of Crisis — from the Soviet War to Taliban Recapture." NPR.org. National Public Radio, August 19, 2021. <https://www.npr.org/2021/08/19/1028472005/afghanistan-conflict-timeline>.
- Brookings. "Recognition and the Taliban." Brookings, September 30, 2022. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/recognition-and-the-taliban-2/>.
- Butt, Riazat. "2 Years Ago, the Taliban Banned Girls from School. It's a Worsening Crisis for All Afghans." AP News, September 18, 2023. <https://apnews.com/article/afghanistan-taliban-high-school-ban-girls-7046b3dbb76ca76d40343db6ba547556>.
- Byrd, William, and Christopher Ward. "DRUGS and DEVELOPMENT in AFGHANISTAN," 2004. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/156391468740439773/pdf/30903.pdf>.
- Byrd, William. "Afghanistan's Crisis Requires a Coherent, Coordinated International Response." United States Institute of Peace, May 16, 2023. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/05/afghanistans-crisis-requires-coherent-coordinated-international-response>.
- Byrd, William. "The Taliban's Successful Opium Ban Is Bad for Afghans and the World." United States Institute of Peace, June 8, 2023. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/06/talibans-successful-opium-ban-bad-afghans-and-world>.
- Central Intelligence Agency. "Country Summary." [CIA.gov](http://CIA.gov). Central Intelligence Agency, September 2024. <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/afghanistan/summaries>.
- Chandrashekar, Vaishnavi. "As Himalayan Glaciers Melt, a Water Crisis Looms in South Asia." Yale E360, October 3, 2022. <https://e360.yale.edu/features/himalayas-glaciers-climate-change>.
- ChartsBin. "Countries Currently Contributing Troops to ISAF." ChartsBin, 2011. <http://chartsbin.com/view/nnu>.
- Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees Punjab. "Afghan Citizen Card | Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees." Punjab.gov.pk, 2017. [https://car.punjab.gov.pk/afghan\\_citizen\\_card](https://car.punjab.gov.pk/afghan_citizen_card).
- Congressional Research Service. "Afghanistan: Background and U.S. Policy," December 4, 2023. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45122>.
- Congressional Research Service. "Al Qaeda: Background, Current Status, and U.S. Policy," May 6, 2024. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11854>.
- Council on Foreign Relations. "The UN Security Council." Accessed September 21, 2024. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/un-security-council>.
- Council on Foreign Relations. "The UN Security Council." Council on Foreign Relations, February 28, 2023. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/un-security-council>.
- Crawford, Alex. "Afghanistan: Inside Prison Where Children as Young as 12 Are Held and Female Governor Has Vanished." Sky

- News, February 2022. <https://news.sky.com/story/afghanistan-inside-prison-where-children-as-young-as-12-are-held-and-female-governor-has-vanished-12534928>.
- Crawford, James . “The Criteria for Statehood: Statehood as Effectiveness.” In *The Creation of States in International Law*. Oxford Academic, 2007.
- Danish, Tawab. “Hazaras and Shias: Violence, Discrimination, and Exclusion under the Taliban.” [www.jurist.org](http://www.jurist.org), May 14, 2024. <https://www.jurist.org/commentary/2024/05/hazaras-and-shias-violence-discrimination-and-exclusion-under-taliban/>.
- Dawi, Akmal. “Can the Taliban Tackle Corruption in Afghanistan?” VOA, January 31, 2023. <https://www.voanews.com/a/can-the-taliban-tackle-corruption-in-afghanistan-/6942205.html>.
- Debates, Raisina. “Navigating the Terror Threat: Russia and India in Afghanistan.” [orfonline.org](http://orfonline.org), June 24, 2024. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/navigating-the-terror-threat-russia-and-india-in-afghanistan>.
- Dormandy, Xenia. “Afghanistan’s Proxy War.” Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2007. <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/afghanistans-proxy-war>.
- Encyclopedia Britannica. “Al-Qaeda | History, Meaning, Terrorist Attacks, & Facts.” In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/al-Qaeda>.
- Encyclopedia Britannica. “Durand Line | Boundary, Asia.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, n.d. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Durand-Line>.
- Encyclopedia Britannica. “Mohammad Daud Khan | Prime Minister of Afghanistan | Britannica.” In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mohammad-Daud-Khan>.
- Encyclopedia Britannica. “Mujahideen | Afghani Rebels | Britannica.” In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mujahideen-Afghani-rebels>.
- Encyclopedia Britannica. “Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan.” In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, October 17, 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion-of-Afghanistan>.
- Encyclopedia Britannica. “Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan.” In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, October 17, 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion-of-Afghanistan>.
- Encyclopedia Britannica. “United Nations Security Council | History & Members.” In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations-Security-Council>.
- European Commission. “SDGs | KnowSDGs.” [knowsdgs.jrc.ec.europa.eu](https://knowsdgs.jrc.ec.europa.eu), n.d. <https://knowsdgs.jrc.ec.europa.eu/sdg/1>.
- European Foundation for South Asian Studies. “The Durand Line - a Razor’s Edge between Afghanistan & Pakistan.” [Efsas.org](http://Efsas.org), 2017. <https://www.efsas.org/publications/study-papers/the-durand-line-a-razors-edge-between-afghanistan-and-pakistan/>.
- European Foundation for South Asian Studies. “The Durand Line - a Razor’s Edge between Afghanistan & Pakistan.” [www.efsas.org](http://www.efsas.org). Accessed July 13, 2024. <https://www.efsas.org/publications/study-papers/the-durand-line-a-razors-edge-between-afghanistan-and-pakistan/>.
- Federal Bureau of Investigation. “Osama Bin Laden.” Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI, n.d. <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/osama-bin-laden>.
- Felbab-Brown, Vanda. “A BRI(Dge) Too Far: The Unfulfilled Promise and Limitations of China’s Involvement in Afghanistan.” Brookings, June 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/a-bridge-too-far-the-unfulfilled-promise-and-limitations-of-chinas-involvement-in-afghanistan/>.
- Franks, Tommy R., and Donald H. Romsfeld. “Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services - United States Senate.” 2002. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-107shrg83471/html/CHRG-107shrg83471.htm>.
- Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed, and Tara Vassefi. “The Forgotten History of Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations.” *Yale Journal of International Affairs*, February 22, 2012. <https://www.yalejournal.org/publications/the-forgotten-history-of-afghanistan->

pakistan-relations.

Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security. “Afghanistan.” Georgetown Institute of Women Peace and Security, 2024. <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/country/afghanistan/>.

Ghantous, Nour. “Proxy Wars, Explained.” FairPlanet, December 8, 2023. <https://www.fairplanet.org/story/what-are-proxy-wars-and-where-are-they-happening/>.

Girardet, Edward, and Internet Archive. *Killing the Cranes : A Reporter’s Journey through Three Decades of War in Afghanistan*. Internet Archive. White River Junction, Vt. : Chelsea Green Pub., 2011. <https://archive.org/details/killingcranesrep0000gira/page/n1/mode/1up>.

Girls Not Brides. “Child Marriage Atlas.” Girls Not Brides, 2024. <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/atlas/afghanistan/>.

Giustozzi, Antonio. “How Much of a Threat Is the Islamic State in Khorasan?” *rusi.org* <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/how-much-threat-islamic-state-khorasan>, March 2022. <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/how-much-threat-islamic-state-khorasan>.

Glinski, Stefanie. “‘Countdown to Catastrophe’: Half of Afghans Face Hunger This Winter – UN.” *the Guardian*, October 25, 2021. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/oct/25/countdown-to-catastrophe-half-of-afghans-face-hunger-this-winter-un>.

Global Organized Crime Index. “Criminality in Afghanistan - the Organized Crime Index.” *ocindex.net*, n.d. <https://ocindex.net/country/afghanistan>.

Gul, Ayaz. “Pakistan Shares Probe Findings with Afghan Taliban on Attack against Chinese Nationals.” *Voice of America*, May 30, 2024. <https://www.voanews.com/a/pakistan-shares-probe-findings-with-afghan-taliban-on-attack-against-chinese-nationals-/7636657.html>.

Gupwell, Dick. “Loya Jirga Elects Karzai as New Head of State.” *EurAsia Bulletin* 6 (2002). <https://web.archive.org/web/20120321204954/http://www.eias.org/publications/bulletin/2002/mayjun02/ebmayjun02.pdf>.

Hakimi, Hameed, and Gareth Price. “Afghanistan: One Year of Taliban Rule.” Chatham House – International Affairs Think Tank, August 15, 2022. <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/08/afghanistan-one-year-taliban-rule>.

Hasht-E Subh. “To Stay or to Leave: Assessing the Impact of UNAMA’s Presence in Afghanistan.” *Hasht e Subh*, April 18, 2023. <https://8am.media/eng/to-stay-or-to-leave-assessing-the-impact-of-unamas-presence-in-afghanistan/>.

Hegghammer, Thomas. *The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters*. Vol. 35. Harvard College: International Security, 2010. [https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/files/The\\_Rise\\_of\\_Muslim\\_Foreign\\_Fighters.pdf](https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/files/The_Rise_of_Muslim_Foreign_Fighters.pdf).

History Channel, “Soviets Take over in Afghanistan,” *HISTORY*, November 13, 2009, <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/soviets-take-over-in-afghanistan>.

Human Rights Watch. “The Taliban and the Global Backlash against Women’s Rights | Human Rights Watch.” *Human Rights Watch*, February 6, 2024. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/02/06/taliban-and-global-backlash-against-womens-rights>.

Hussain, Abid. “Tensions High after Pakistan Launches Cross-Border Attacks into Afghanistan.” *Al Jazeera*, March 18, 2024. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/3/18/pakistan-launch-retaliatory-strikes-inside-afghanistan-raising-tensions>.

Hussain, Abid. “‘What’s Wrong?’: The Silence of Pakistanis on Expulsion of Afghan Refugees.” *Al Jazeera*, November 22, 2023. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/22/whats-wrong-the-silence-of-pakistanis-on-expulsion-of-afghan-refugees>.

Hyman, Anthony. “Nationalism in Afghanistan.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34, no. 2 (2002): 299–315. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3879829>.

Ighobor, Kingsley. “As a UN Security Council Member, Sierra Leone Will Promote Peace, Security and Good Governance in Africa.” *Africa Renewal*, June 16, 2023. <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/may-2023/un-security-council-member-sierra-leone-will-promote-peace-security-and-good>.

Inskeep, Steve, and Rachel Treisman. “Hamid Karzai Stays on in Afghanistan — Hoping for the Best, but Unable to Leave.” *NPR*.



- org, August 8, 2022. <https://www.npr.org/2022/08/08/1115674232/afghanistan-taliban-hamid-karzai-us-withdrawal>.
- Institute for Economics & Peace. "Global Terrorism Index 2023." Institute for Economics & Peace, March 2023. <https://www.economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/GTI-2023-web.pdf>.
- Internal Displacement Monitoring Committee. "Afghanistan." IDMC - Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, May 2024. <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/afghanistan/>.
- International Crisis Group. "Taliban Restrictions on Women's Rights Deepen Afghanistan's Crisis." [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org), February 23, 2023. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/329-taliban-restrictions-womens-rights-deepen-afghanistans-crisis>.
- International Crisis Group. "The Taliban's Neighbourhood: Regional Diplomacy with Afghanistan | Crisis Group." [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org), January 30, 2024. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/337-talibans-neighbourhood-regional-diplomacy-afghanistan>.
- International Rescue Committee. "Afghanistan: An Entire Population Pushed into Poverty | International Rescue Committee (IRC)." [www.rescue.org](http://www.rescue.org), August 9, 2023. <https://www.rescue.org/article/afghanistan-entire-population-pushed-poverty>.
- International Rescue Committee. "Afghanistan: An Entire Population Pushed into Poverty | International Rescue Committee (IRC)." [www.rescue.org](http://www.rescue.org). International Rescue Committee, December 22, 2022. <https://www.rescue.org/article/afghanistan-entire-population-pushed-poverty>.
- International Rescue Committee. "What Is Drought? Causes, Impact & Countries Most Affected | International Rescue Committee (IRC)." [www.rescue.org](http://www.rescue.org), July 13, 2023. <https://www.rescue.org/article/what-drought-causes-impact-countries-most-affected>.
- Jones, Seth. "Countering a Resurgent Terrorist Threat in Afghanistan." Council on Foreign Relations, April 14, 2022. <https://www.cfr.org/report/countering-resurgent-terrorist-threat-afghanistan>.
- Kaura, Vinay. "The Durand Line: A British Legacy Plaguing Afghan-Pakistani Relations." Middle East Institute, 2018. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/durand-line-british-legacy-plaguing-afghan-pakistani-relations>.
- Keesing's Record of World Events. "'Pakhtoonistan' Dispute. - Military Operations in Frontier Areas. - Pakistani Allegations of Afghan Incursions.," 1958.
- Khaama Press. "Mohammad Daud Khan." The Khaama Press News Agency, February 15, 2010. <https://www.khaama.com/mohammad-daud-khan/>.
- Kumar, Amit, and Aayushi Malhotra. "Factoring Ethnicity in Taliban's Quest for Legitimacy | GJIA." Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, April 17, 2024. <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2024/04/17/factoring-ethnicity-in-talibans-quest-for-legitimacy-an-anthropological-rewiring-of-the-power-structure/>.
- Kumar, Ruchi. "How the Taliban Adds to Afghanistan's Woes When It Comes to Climate-Fueled Disasters." NPR, June 18, 2024. <https://www.npr.org/sections/goats-and-soda/2024/06/04/g-s1-2714/afghanistan-flooding-crisis-taliban-sanctions>.
- Landay, Jonathan. "Profits and Poppy: Afghanistan's Illegal Drug Trade a Boon for Taliban." Reuters, August 16, 2021. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/profits-poppy-afghanistans-illegal-drug-trade-boon-taliban-2021-08-16/>.
- Landay, Jonathan. "U.N. Envoy Says Islamic State Now Appears Present in All Afghan Provinces." Reuters, November 17, 2021, sec. Asia Pacific. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/un-envoy-says-islamic-state-now-appears-present-all-afghan-provinces-2021-11-17/>.
- Lanzillo, Amanda. "Empire and Dependence in Afghan History." Jamhoo, January 27, 2022. <https://www.jamhoo.org/read/empire-and-dependence-in-afghan-history>.
- Latifi, Ali M., and Lutfullah Samim Sherzai. "The New Humanitarian | Pakistan Threatens New Wave of Afghan Deportations." [www.thenewhumanitarian.org](http://www.thenewhumanitarian.org), April 10, 2024. <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2024/04/10/pakistan-threatens-new-wave-afghan-deportations>.

- Lederer, Edith M. "UN Envoy Defends Failure to Include Afghan Women in Upcoming Meeting with the Taliban in Qatar." AP News, June 22, 2024. <https://apnews.com/article/un-afghanistan-taliban-women-girls-education-rights-88e7f5aadb25439b328c90283ac6ab5a>.
- Leslie, Adam. "China's Recognition of the Taliban Sets a Dangerous Precedent." The Strategist, February 7, 2024. <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/chinas-recognition-of-the-taliban-sets-a-dangerous-precedent/>.
- Lieven, Anatol. "Afghan Terrain." carnegieendowment.org, October 2001. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2001/10/afghan-terrain?lang=en>.
- Maizland, Lindsay. "The Taliban in Afghanistan." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, January 19, 2023. <https://www.cfr.org/backgroundunder/taliban-afghanistan>.
- Maizland, Lindsay. "What Is the Taliban?" Council on Foreign Relations, January 19, 2023. <https://www.cfr.org/backgroundunder/taliban-afghanistan>.
- Malig, Kaela. "Afghanistan, 2 Years After: Taliban Repression & Humanitarian Crises Intensify." FRONTLINE, August 15, 2023. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/afghanistan-two-years-taliban-takeover-humanitarian-crises-economy-womens-rights/>.
- Manchanda, Nivi. "Colonial Amnesia and Imperialism in Afghanistan." Jamhoo, August 10, 2022. <https://www.jamhoo.org/read/colonial-amnesia-and-imperialism-in-afghanistan>.
- Marty, Franz J. "The Peculiar Case of Elections under the Taliban." The Diplomat, April 26, 2022. <https://thediplomat.com/2022/04/the-peculiar-case-of-elections-under-the-taliban/>.
- Mills, Claire. "Withdrawal of Military Forces in Afghanistan and Its Implications for Peace." Commonslibrary.parliament.uk, January 10, 2021. <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9241/>.
- Minority Rights Group. "Afghanistan - Minority Rights Group." Minority Rights Group, 2015. <https://minorityrights.org/country/afghanistan/>.
- Minority Rights Group. "Pashtuns in Pakistan - Minority Rights Group." Minority Rights Group, April 12, 2024. <https://minorityrights.org/communities/pashtuns-2/>.
- Mir, Asfandyar. "The ISIS-K Resurgence | Wilson Center." www.wilsoncenter.org, October 8, 2021. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/isis-k-resurgence>.
- Mukhopadhyay, Dipali. *Warlords, Strongman Governors, and the State in Afghanistan* / Dipali Mukhopadhyay. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Murtazashvili, Jennifer. "Taliban Urges Pakistan to Grant More Time for Undocumented Afghans to Leave." Al Jazeera, November 2023. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/1/taliban-urges-pakistan-to-grant-more-time-for-undocumented-afghans-to-leave>.
- Murtazashvili, Jennifer. "The Collapse of Afghanistan." *Journal of Democracy* 33, no. 1 (January 2022), 40–54.
- Murtazashvili, Jennifer. "The History of the Taliban." www.aljazeera.com, August 18, 2021. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/8/18/the-history-of-the-taliban>.
- National Geographic. "The Durand Line | National Geographic Society." education.nationalgeographic.org, n.d. <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/durand-line/>.
- Naval History and Heritage Command. "Operation Enduring Freedom." Naval History and Heritage Command, 2024. <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/wars-conflicts-and-operations/middle-east/operation-enduring-freedom.html>.
- Naval History and Heritage Command. "Operation Enduring Freedom." Navy.mil, 2019. <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/wars-conflicts-and-operations/middle-east/operation-enduring-freedom.html>.
- Nivi Manchanda. *Imagining Afghanistan the History and Politics of Imperial Knowledge*. Cambridge, United Kingdom New York, Ny Port Melbourne, Vic New Delhi Singapore Cambridge University Press, 2020.

- Noori, Sameera. "Climate Change, Conflict and Displacement: Perspectives from Afghanistan | Humanitarian Practice Network." Humanitarian Practice Network, March 13, 2024. <https://odihpn.org/publication/climate-change-conflict-and-displacement-perspectives-from-afghanistan/>.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). "Relations with the United Nations." Last modified July 25, 2023. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50321.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50321.htm).
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization. "10 Things You Need to Know about NATO." NATO, March 11, 2024. <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/126169.htm>.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization. "Birth of NATO." NATO, n.d. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified\\_137851.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified_137851.htm).
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization. "ISAF's Mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014)." NATO, n.d. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_69366.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm).
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization. "North Atlantic Council Ministerial Statement on Afghanistan." NATO, n.d. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_183146.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_183146.htm).
- O'Donnell, Lynne. "The Taliban Have a New Drug of Choice." Foreign Policy, February 22, 2024. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/09/13/taliban-afghanistan-drugs-ban-economy-opium-poppy-meth-heroin-trade/>.
- Peters, Gretchen. *How Opium Profits the Taliban*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute Of Peace, 2009.
- Public Broadcasting Service. "Al Qaeda - Background - al Qaeda | inside the Terror Network | FRONTLINE | PBS." www.pbs.org, n.d. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/network/alqaeda/indictment.html>.
- Rajvanshi, Astha. "Why Pakistan-Afghanistan Tensions Are Soaring." TIME, July 5, 2024. <https://time.com/6995069/pakistan-afghanistan-relations-taliban/>.
- Rehman, Zia Ur. "Afghan Chaos Mounts as ISIS-K Tries to Tarnish Taliban Triumph." Nikkei Asia, September 2021. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Afghanistan-turmoil/Afghan-chaos-mounts-as-ISIS-K-tries-to-tarnish-Taliban-triumph>.
- Rehman, Zia Ur. "Why Did the Afghan Taliban Sour on Pakistan? – DW – 04/20/2024." dw.com, April 2024. <https://www.dw.com/en/why-did-the-afghan-taliban-sour-on-pakistan/a-68873894>.
- Roberts, Leslie. "Taliban Ban on Female NGO Staff Is Deepening Afghanistan's Public Health Crisis." www.science.org, January 2023. <https://www.science.org/content/article/taliban-s-ban-female-staff-ngos-deepening-afghanistan-s-public-health-crisis>.
- Robinson, Lou, Antonio Jarne, Ehsan Popalzai, and Eliza Mackintosh. "'No One Feels Safe': The Taliban Promised to Provide Security to Afghans." CNN, May 19, 2023. <https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/19/asia/isis-k-attacks-afghanistan-taliban-cmd-intl/index.html>.
- Runde, Daniel F., Annie Pforzheimer, Thomas Bryja, and Caroline Smutny. "The Future of Assistance for Afghanistan: A Dilemma." Www.csis.org, June 13, 2024. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/future-assistance-afghanistan-dilemma>.
- Sadat, Wazhma. "Why Sanctions against the Taliban Aren't Working." Foreign Policy, June 29, 2023. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/06/29/taliban-sanctions-act-us-afghanistan/>.
- Sanjay Pulipaka. "Durand Line: Old Contestations and New Conflicts." Asia Times. Asia Times, October 15, 2023. <https://asiatimes.com/2023/10/durand-line-old-contestations-and-new-conflicts/>.
- Schons, Mary. "The Durand Line | National Geographic Society." education.nationalgeographic.org, January 9, 2024. <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/durand-line/>.
- Security Council Report. "The Veto: UN Security Council Working Methods." Last modified December 16, 2020. <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-security-council-working-methods/the-veto.php>.
- Seldin, Jeff. "UN Report Warns Al-Qaida, Islamic State Growing in Afghanistan." VOA, June 14, 2023. <https://www.voanews.com>.

- com/a/un-report-warns-al-qaida-islamic-state-growing-in-afghanistan/7138133.html.
- Shah, Makhdam Karam. "Calming the Neighborhood: Pakistan's Immediate Security Challenges Post-Election | Wilson Center." [www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org), March 28, 2024. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/calming-neighborhood-pakistans-immediate-security-challenges-post-election>.
- Shahzad, Asif. "Pakistan Orders Illegal Immigrants, Including 1.73 Mln Afghans, to Leave." Reuters, October 3, 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/pakistan-orders-all-illegal-immigrants-leave-after-suicide-bombings-2023-10-03/>.
- Sharifi, Arian M. "The Taliban, Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime." Global Initiative, February 2023. <https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/taliban-terrorism-ocindex/>.
- Tsira, Shvangiradze. "1979 Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: The Beginning of the USSR's End." TheCollector. October 29, 2023. <https://www.thecollector.com/soviet-ussr-invasion-afghanistan/>.
- Abubakar Siddique, "Which Countries Have Relations With The Taliban's Unrecognized Government?" Radio Free Europe, May 30, 2024, <https://www.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-taliban-russia-diplomacy/32972530.html>.
- Statista. "Afghanistan - Unemployment Rate 2009-2019." Statista, June 2024. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/808214/unemployment-rate-in-afghanistan/>.
- Strachota, Krzysztof. "Islamic State-Khorasan: Global Jihad's New Front." OSW Centre for Eastern Studies, March 29, 2024. <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2024-03-29/islamic-state-khorasan-global-jihads-new-front>.
- The APPG for International Freedom of Religion or Belief. "Afghanistan." The APPG for International Freedom of Religion or Belief, 2020. <https://appgfreedomofreligionorbelief.org/afghanistan/>.
- The National Security Archive. "Taliban File Update." [nsarchive2.gwu.edu](http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu), March 19, 2004. <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB97/index3.htm>.
- The White House. "Remarks by President Biden on the End of the War in Afghanistan." The White House, August 31, 2021. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/08/31/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-end-of-the-war-in-afghanistan/>.
- Thompson, Shamala Kandiah, 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/>.
- Times of India. "The Durand Line: A 128-Year-Old Thorn in Afghanistan-Pakistan Ties." The Times of India, January 17, 2022. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/the-durand-line-a-128-year-old-thorn-in-af-pak-ties/articleshow/88955917.cms>.
- Tu, Jessie. "UN Criticised for Complying with Taliban's Restriction on Women in Talks." Women's Agenda, July 1, 2024. <https://womensagenda.com.au/latest/un-criticised-for-complying-with-talibans-restriction-on-women-in-talks/>.
- U.S. Department of State. "What Is Modern Slavery?" United States Department of State, 2019. <https://www.state.gov/what-is-modern-slavery/>.
- United States Department of State. "Afghanistan." United States Department of State, 2023. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-trafficking-in-persons-report/afghanistan/>.
- United States Institute of Peace. "Establishing the Rule of Law in Afghanistan about the REPORT," 2004. <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr117.pdf>.
- United States Office of the Historian. "Afghanistan - Countries - Office of the Historian." [history.state.gov](http://history.state.gov), n.d. <https://history.state.gov/countries/afghanistan>.
- United States Office of the Historian. "The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S. Response, 1978–1980." State.gov, n.d. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1977-1980/soviet-invasion-afghanistan>.
- United States White House. "U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan," 2023. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/>

uploads/2023/04/US-Withdrawal-from-Afghanistan.pdf.

- Vissamsetti, Bharat, Mark Payne, and Stephen Payne. "Inadvertent Prescription of Gelatin-Containing Oral Medication: Its Acceptability to Patients." *Postgraduate Medical Journal* 88, no. 1043 (February 28, 2012): 499–502. <https://doi.org/10.1136/postgradmedj-2011-130306>.
- Warsi, Zeba. "Afghanistan Sinks Deeper into Crisis as Sanctions Take Heavy Toll on Civilians." *PBS News*, August 26, 2022. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/amp/show/afghanistan-sinks-deeper-into-crisis-as-sanctions-take-heavy-toll-on-civilians>.
- Watson Institute. "Human Costs of U.S. Post-9/11 Wars: Direct War Deaths in Major War Zones | Figures | Costs of War." *The Costs of War*. Brown University, September 2021. <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/figures/2021/WarDeathToll>.
- Witte, Griff. "Afghanistan War." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, August 16, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Afghanistan-War>.
- "Bonn Agreement," December 1, 2001. <https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/?pdf0652?000>.

The National High School Model United Nations Conference (NHSMUN) is a project of IMUNA, a non-profit organization formally associated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications (UNDGC). IMUNA is dedicated to promoting global issues education through simulation.

Written by Mariana Ferreira and David Phipps

Edited by Jordan Baker, Seonghyun (Shawn) Chang, Ana Margarita Gil, Grace Harb, Christian Hernandez, Therese Salomone, and Terry Wang.

© 2024 IMUNA. All Rights Reserved.

