

McKennaMUN VIII Background Guide



Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)

**April 4-5 2020
Claremont McKenna
College**



DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to McKennaMUN VIII! We are so excited to have you, and I am incredibly thrilled to be your chair in DISEC for an engaging, interactive, and collaborative weekend focusing on some of the world's most urgent crises.

My name is Olivia Fish, and I am a freshman at Claremont McKenna College planning to major in International Relations with a focus in human rights. Besides being involved on the CMC Model UN team, I work on the Free Food for Thought podcast, am a volunteer tutor for a nonprofit called School on Wheels, and work in the kitchen at the Athenaeum. Before coming to CMC, I participated on my high school's Model UN team for three years. However, my time on the CMC Model UN team has been one of my favorite things about my college experience so far, and I am so excited to be a part of McKennaMUN!

Given the importance of DISEC on the international stage, the topics and issues it looks at are some of the most critical that our world has ever faced. By discussing issues that will determine the fate of the world's future, you, as delegates, will be working to protect the world and the people in it from some of the deepest threats and dangers any of us could imagine. I truly believe that both of these issues are simultaneously the most pertinent and dynamic dangers the world faces today, and I look forward to seeing how the committee decides to address them. If you

have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at ofish23@cmc.edu! I

have no doubt this will be a great weekend of important discussion.

Best,

Olivia Fish

Chair, DISEC

HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) was created as the first General Assembly at the signing of the UN Charter in 1945.¹ DISEC was created in order for there to be an international forum to discuss both issues of peace and security among the international community. According to the UN Charter, the purpose of DISEC in the General Assembly is to establish “general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments.”² Although DISEC cannot directly advise the Security Council’s decision-making process, the fourth chapter of the UN charter explains that DISEC does and can suggest specific topics for UNSC consideration. DISEC is also an institution of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), formally named in January 1988.³ The UNODA is concerned with disarmament at all levels—nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction, and conventional weapons—and assists DISEC through its work with the General Assembly to further disarmament initiatives.

Often referred to as the First Committee, DISEC deals with disarmament, global challenges, and threats to peace that affect the international community, seeking out solutions to the challenges in the international security regime.⁴ Presently, DISEC is focused most on collective peace and security towards the main objective of disarmament internationally.

Landmark documents include Resolution 1, Resolution 1378, and special sessions on disarmament where resolutions were adopted in 1978, 1982, and 1988.⁵

Topic I: Prevention of Extreme Radicalism

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the 21st century, terrorism and extremist ideologies have incited global fear and enabled the spread of hateful and discriminatory rhetoric. Whether it be the attack in America on September 11, 2001, the Christchurch shootings in New Zealand, the 2015 Paris terrorist attacks, the attack at the Indian parliament in 2001, or the hundreds of mass shootings in the West, it is undeniable our world faces an issue that does not seem to be improving. Citizens are afraid and angry, and it is the responsibility of this body to come together to restore a sense of peace and stability throughout the world, if that is even possible.

In the context of international affairs, radicalization is defined as the process by which a person becomes an advocate of radical political or social reform and their way of thinking and engaging with society becomes drastically different.⁶ Violent extremism, on the other hand, is when a person decides that methods making use of fear and terror are justified to achieve an ideological or political agenda.⁷ And while radicalization does not necessarily lead to violent extremism, the two concepts are often highly connected. The classic narrative of radicalization has been simple in the past: in the face of an occupying force, totalitarian regimes, ethno

religious persecution, or rapid cultural change, a set of likely impoverished and uneducated people transform into a violent opposition force. In turn, this often leads to an equally predictable solution of legal reform expansion, educational reform, and economic empowerment.

Unfortunately, this simple equation does not work as clearly as it did in the past. After first looking at the long history of both religious and secular forms of radicalization, a closer look at the largest forms of terrorism today are presented: Islamic and White Nationalist extremism. By understanding these new forms of terrorism that rebel against the old, pre-prescribed formulas for how to resolve such violent uprisings, this body must come together to understand how these groups and their actions can be put to a stop.

HISTORY

Religious Extremism

Beginning as early as 160 B.C.E., Jewish extremism existed in Israel. The Hasmonaean group was the most prominent Jewish group committing acts of violence and terrorism through guerilla warfare campaigns.⁸ Many Jews living in Israel vehemently opposed the Hellenistic rule of the time, and this created an extreme divide between those in political power and the Jewish people. The largest incident of terrorism committed by this group was the murder of the Appelles, a Hellenistic envoy.⁹

As the political landscape in Israel began to shift, urban Jews established their own form of aristocracy and began to favor Hellenistic ways. This led to even more isolation of Jews who

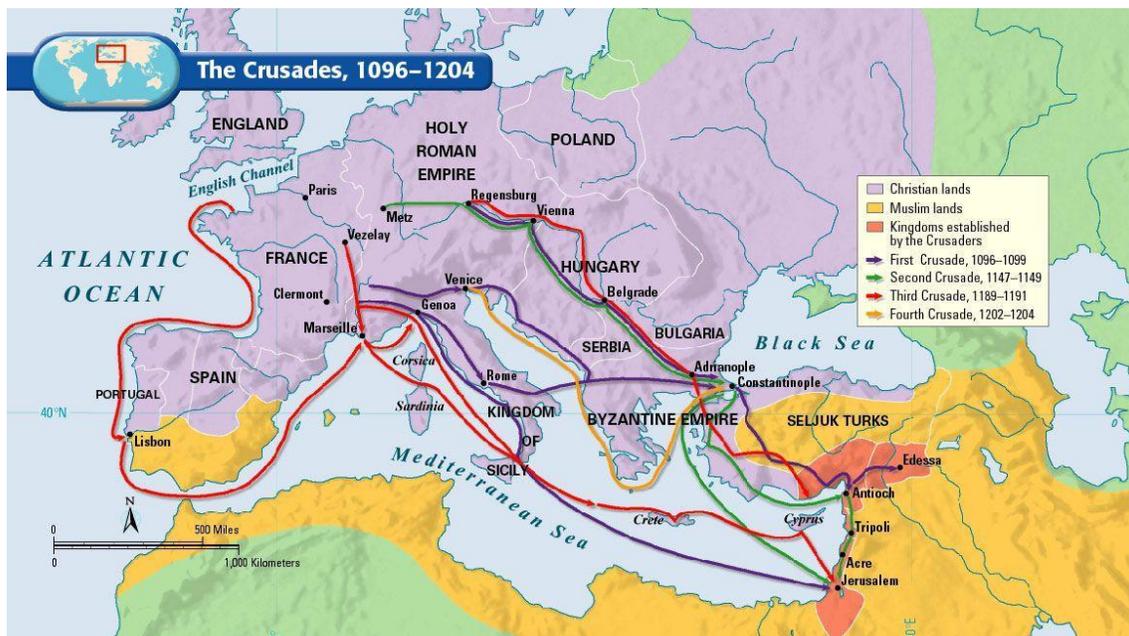
still did not like this form of rule, and separated the poor, rural Jews from the wealthier, urban Jews who had been Hellenized. A man named Matisyahu became a leader of these rural Jews, creating a culture of rebellion and terrorism targeting Hellenized Jews.¹⁰

Nearly one hundred years after the fall of the Hasmonaean kingdom, relations between Jews and non-Jews in Israel reached a low point in the face of Roman rule. As it is understood today, the fall of the Second Temple comes from complete, blind hatred in the revolt against Rome. The earliest known extremist organization, the Sicarii, were Jewish Zealots who operated during the first century. The Sicarii targeted Roman Officials and Hebrew Sympathizers key to the Roman occupation of Judea. Known for the small daggers they concealed on their persons, their political targeting stemmed from their ideologies as a resistance organization and the radicalization that appealed to the suffering of many due to the occupation of Judea.¹¹

The most notable instance of Christian extremism is in the case of the Crusades. Before Constantine's rise to power, Christians often were the victims of extremism. Once Constantine normalized and gave prestige to the Church, Christians were the ones in power and no longer feared persecution. Christian orthodoxy emerged as a badge of "communal cohesion and political identity," and the Church was known to partake in exclusionary behaviors such as ostracization and excommunication of dissident groups or individuals. In the eight major Crusade expeditions, this perceived "holy pilgrimage" became an aggressively violent way for European Christians to impose their religious views on Jews, Orthodox Christians, heretics, and Muslims. With a long fight between Christian and Muslim groups battling over holy sites, the

Crusades existed almost solely out of religious faith and the motivation to gain control of holy territory, namely Jerusalem.¹²

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While the Crusades originally were successful for the Crusaders as they captured Jerusalem, Damascus, Cairo, Jaffa, and other critical cities, the Crusades quickly began to lose their strength with the rise of the Mamluks. The final Crusades no longer focused on toppling Muslim forces in holy lands, but on combatting all enemies of the Christian faith. As the Mamluks, a powerful Muslim dynasty, came to power, they captured every last city the

Crusaders had. In 1291, the Mamluks captured the final Crusade city, Acre, and the major Crusades were over.¹⁴

The most powerful Islamic blocs prior to the modern era consisted of the Safavid empire in Iran, the Mughal empire in India, and the Ottoman empire centered in Turkey. But despite this power, Western imperialism was a dominating force in many Islamic states. After two failed sieges of Vienna in 1529 and 1683, Suleiman's rule in the 1500s began to falter and Turkish domination in the 1600s was on the decline.¹⁵ Both of these failures also marked the strong incline of Western imperialism, especially in Muslim-majority regions.¹⁶ The lack of political and religious power was debilitating for many Muslims, and led to a culture of resentment for the West as they suppressed the Islamic states and their powers.

In more recent years, the notion of Christian extremism has existed in varying forms. In the early twentieth century, the Klu Klux Klan (KKK) spread racist, hateful messages throughout America, with their ideologies stemming from their Christian faith. The Christian Identity Movement (CI) became a prominent force in the twentieth century as a highly racist, right-wing, and socially conservative Protestant Christian ideology. They spread the idea of the "Two-Seed Theology," where Jews are regarded as the children of Satan and Christian gospel is solely meant for the Aryan race.¹⁷ The CI Movement had given rise to other Christian extremist groups in the twentieth century including the Church of Jesus Christ Christian/Aryan Nations and the Phineas Priesthood.¹⁸

The real root of what now is known as Islamic extremism began with World War I. Beyond being subject to Christian imperialism for centuries, Muslim nations had to watch British

troops occupy Damascus and Baghdad, two of their most powerful cities at the time.¹⁹ This undeniable loss of political power was humiliating, especially understanding that just a few centuries ago, the situation was reversed. The reactions to this political overtaking by the Christian world led to three different responses: the Traditionalist, the Revivalist, and the Modernist.²⁰ What the world sees as Islamic extremism today can be considered the Modernist response, as they prioritize regaining political power. The Modernist therefore sees the establishment of an Islamic State as a necessary precursor to restoring Islamic political power. Jihadism in the twentieth century can also be understood as a form of the Muslim liberation struggle.²¹

Secular Extremism

In recent centuries there have been many forms of secular terrorism with new motivations of political insurgency. In the wake of the Enlightenment, terrorism was defined in the contemporary Western world as an official policy for revolution, specifically in France. Maximilien Robespierre, a French revolutionary leader in the 1700s, led the “Reign of Terror” with the belief that terror was a necessary factor to allowing the new French Republic to survive. The newly defined ideas of nationalism and terrorism arose from the results of the French Revolution, with a new context for secular terrorism.²²

Political ideologies such as Marxism and Carlo Pisacanes theory of the “propaganda of the deed” gave way for deeper political insurgencies in more recent centuries. Pisacane’s theory was first put into practice by the Narodnaya Colya, a Russian Populist group. Translated as the People’s Will, this group most famously assassinated Alexander II in March of 1881.

Unfortunately, this led to the wrath of the Tsarist regime in Russia, but their movement inspired radical, anarchist groups in other places such as Ireland and the Balkans. Pisacane's theory argued that the utility of terrorism was ultimately to deliver a message to an audience other than the target and draw attention and support to a cause, often political.²³

State-sponsored terrorism also became highly prevalent even before World War I, as Serbian officials partook in raising up armies in the Balkans working to assassinate the Archduke in 1914.²⁴ Nationalist and anti-colonial groups conducting guerilla warfare became a similarly powerful force, with nations including China and Indonesia experiencing internal insurgencies against French colonialism and struggles in Kenya, Malaysia, Cyprus, and Palestine among other states fighting British colonialism with terrorist activity and violence. State-sponsored terrorism remains relevant and threatening to the international community, mainly in Middle Eastern states as Islamic radicalization is on the rise.²⁵

Ultimately, the history of radical extremism shows the international community that political power, imperialism, and subjugation leads to intense instability and chaos. As a body, this committee must come together to understand what exactly leads to the political instability seen over and over again throughout the history of radicalized actions, and what can be done to prevent this brutal pattern from continuing.

THE ISSUE

General Overview, Present Day:

Today, extremism is one of the largest, most unpredictable threats the international community faces. Rising to the forefront after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 in the United States, the so-called War on Terrorism has been a priority for much of the world. The Bush administration declared this War on Terror quickly after the attacks on 9/11, with the strategy involving open and covert military initiatives, new security legislation, and efforts to block the financing of terrorism. Many governments worldwide joined the campaign by adopting harsh new laws and lifting legal protections.²⁶ By increasing domestic policing and intelligence work in many governments, the War on Terror quickly became an intensive international effort. However, this effort also became a way to spread ideologies of fear and repression that only served to inspire enemies and promote violence. The campaign became an excuse for the problematic actions of repressive governments and served to limit civil liberties.



So far, the War on Terror has cost just the United States more than \$2.4 trillion USD, and groups like Al Qaeda and the Taliban are still in full force.²⁷ The 21st century has been dominated by terrorism since the very beginning, with Osama Bin Laden leading much of the force until his assassination. Terrorists have, outside of the 9/11 attacks, worked to bait India into war with Pakistan with numerous terrorist attacks throughout India, and have sparked absolute havoc worldwide by inciting true and constant fear globally.²⁸ Extremists of the 21st century have

also destroyed the reputation of Islam, and have led to a global phenomenon of hate and Islamophobia.

Almost more concerning, however, is the near-complete neglect of a different form of terrorism rising in the world: White Nationalist Extremism. After a shooting in Christchurch, New Zealand where 50 were killed, the gunman claimed he drew inspiration from white extremist terrorism attacks in Norway, the United States, Italy, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.²⁹ There is an informal network of white extremists rapidly growing on the global stage today and reflect the growing influence of social media in facilitating the spread of this dangerous extremist ideology. In just one example, a gunman in Munich, Germany connected with a school shooter in New Mexico; together, they killed eleven people despite being in different continents.³⁰

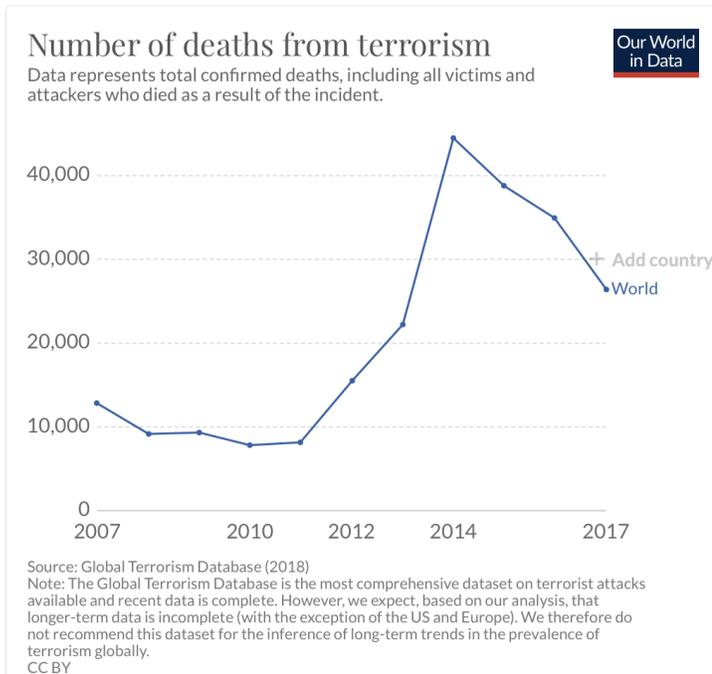
The rise of white extremism has come about as a result of the rise in white supremacism, xenophobia and Islamophobia in the face of Islamic extremism and violence. The Global Terrorism Database identified nearly 350 white extremist terrorist attacks in Europe, North America, and Australia between 2011 and 2017.³¹ These 350 attacks account for about 8% of all attacks in these regions and nearly a third of all attacks in the United States. This reflects the concerning rise in hate crimes and bias in the West, and even still these terrorist attacks are seen as less threatening than Islamic extremist attacks.

Since President Trump has entered office, America has seen a sharp rise in terrorist attacks, specifically by white extremists. In the horrific weekend with both the deadly El Paso and Dayton shootings, both shooters represented much of Trump's hateful rhetoric, and are

believed to have seen his message as inspiration for their actions. But despite the rise in mass shootings in America and in the West committed by white men who have similar ideologies to Trump, the President simply dismisses the rising threat as a “small group of people,” and refuses to moderate his language.³² In 2019, the number of mass shootings across solely the United States had outpaced the number of days in the year, and puts 2019 on track to be the first year since 2016 to have more mass shootings than days.³³ White extremist terrorist acts are far too neglected compared to Islamic extremism because, for Western states, Islamic terrorism is easier to villainize. Instead of recognizing that White Nationalist Terrorism is becoming one of the West’s biggest threats, the Trump administration prefers to pass Islamophobic legislation such as adopting a total ban on Muslims entering the United States while other Western governments scapegoat the entire Islamic community, brushing off white terrorism with excuses among the lines of blaming violent video games for the actions of white extremists.³⁴ White extremist terrorism is still not recognized as terrorism in the same sense as Islamic radicalized terrorism.

That being said, terrorism in Africa and the Middle East is still the most pressing, as the four deadliest terrorist groups, responsible for 59% of all terrorist-related deaths in 2016, include ISIL, Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda, and the Taliban.³⁵ ISIL, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, is the deadliest group today with direct attacks in fifteen countries. While ISIL is losing traction in Syria and Iraq, other affiliate groups are becoming more active and the problems in these states remain the same despite the status of ISIL.³⁶ Conflict and political terror continue to be the primary drivers of political activity as has been the case for centuries. Extremist groups aim to provide a redemptive narrative for their

missions, and therefore there is a continual increase in the number of foreign fighters. It is estimated that over 40,000 foreign fighters have joined ISIL since 2013.³⁷



³⁸ The nations with the highest impact of terrorism, according to the 2018 Global Terrorism Index, are Middle Eastern and western African nations including Iraq as number one, and nations including India, Somalia, Yemen, Nigeria, Syria, and Egypt in the top ten.³⁹ Notably, the United States is number twenty on the list, and the United Kingdom falls at the twenty-eighth spot.⁴⁰ In 2017, an estimated 26,445 people died from

terrorism globally compared to the average 21,000 from past years.

Key Regions

Terrorism tends to be very geographically focused, with 95% of deaths in 2017 occurring in the Middle East, Africa, or South Asia.⁴¹ Given the extent of instability in all of these regions, the rise of terrorism connects with the trends of the past: political instability creates a power vacuum that attempts to be filled by violent action and extremist ideology. In focusing on these regions, and in understanding the complexities within each region as each country has their own problems and unique relationships to extremism, this body must work to improve not only the level of violence and extremism, but the stability of these regions. While there is a

disproportionate amount of terrorist attacks in the Middle East, these nations unsurprisingly also have the highest levels of corruption, with states including Somalia, Syria, Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Yemen in the bottom five for worst levels of corruption.⁴² By focusing on political stability in these regions, a decline in extremist behavior may also decline.

State-sponsored terrorism is another important factor in this issue to consider when emphasizing the importance of political stability. Nations including Iran, Cuba, North Korea, and Sudan are known to have state sponsored terrorism, and there must be measures in place to focus on this underlying issue that fosters more organized extremism.⁴³

Another important region to look at will be Western states who have succumbed to brutal attacks by white extremists. The most pressing nation to look at is the United States, where it is estimated that 39,773 deaths in 2019 are from gun violence, including homicides and suicides.⁴⁴ Gun violence at the hands of white extremists has become an epidemic, and given that Western governments do not seem to be taking action, seeing white extremists as merely a “small group,” international action must be considered by this committee.

Past UN Action

The United Nations Office of Counterterrorism was established as a result of the adoption of Resolution 71/291 in the General Assembly in 2017. The office has five key functions: provide leadership on the General Assembly counter-terrorism mandates; enhance coordination and coherence across the 38 Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Task Force; strengthen the delivery of the UN counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Member States; improve visibility, advocacy, and resource mobilization; ensure that fair priority is given

to counterterrorism across the UN system.⁴⁵ The office has strong relations with the Security Council and with Member States, with it being the first major reform by the Secretary-General.

The Office of Counterterrorism has already adopted numerous resolutions since their founding in 2017, most notable being S/RES/2396 adopted in December of 2017 that addressed threats to international peace and security caused by “foreign terrorist fighters.”⁴⁶ The Security Council has also adopted numerous resolutions addressing counterterrorism efforts while working in conjunction with the Office of Counterterrorism.

Most relevant to the UN’s past actions is the attempt by the UN to provide a global framework for preventing greater spread of radicalization as well as increasing the research on the psychology that radicalization relies on. Much of the discussion on extremism is rooted in UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon’s “Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,” where the General Assembly adopted a resolution working to further focus efforts and resources on this issue.⁴⁷ Moon’s proposed policies include a variety of attacks on radicalization including “better service delivery, accountability for gross violations, enhancing community policing, empowering youth, addressing existing human rights violations, protecting and empowering women, mainstreaming gender perspectives, fostering an entrepreneurial culture amongst youth.”⁴⁸

Unfortunately, the resolution put forth by the General Assembly simply wrote that they would “give further consideration to the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism beginning in the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review in June 2016 as well as in other relevant forums.”⁴⁹

Due to this weak response, much of the international conversation around violent extremism has ceased to exist. It is therefore the responsibility of this committee to reignite the conversation

around how to bring an end to this global crisis, and how to best understand what the crisis even is.

BLOC Positions

Africa

Besides Middle Eastern states, the African continent is the most affected by radicalization. Prominent terrorist groups include Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda affiliated Al-Shabab, and the Christian Fundamentalist Lord's Resistance Army.⁵⁰ Since 2006, it is estimated that there has been more than an 1000% increase in terrorism in Africa with twenty-two African nations being targeted.⁵¹

Legislatively, the African Union (AU) is quite strong in its counterterrorism efforts. In 1999, the AU held the Algiers Convention on the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism where the Common Defense and Security Policy and the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism were adopted.⁵² The African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism uniquely plays an important role in helping victims of terrorist acts, working to sensitize and mobilize nations on these tragic issues.⁵³ However, it is important to note that despite these important initiatives, the ideas of the AU have not necessarily translated into successful counterterrorism strategies in reality.

Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

The MENA region is the foremost victim of radical extremist violence and the primary supplier of radicalized militants. Much of radicalized success in the region is due to political instability, with terrorist activity in states including Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Afghanistan,

Syria, and Iraq, all nations which had strong civil disturbance during the recent Arab Spring. Consequently, in states with no civil disturbance in the region, such as Oman, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Morocco, radical violence and recruitment risks are far lower.⁵⁴ The phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters has resulted in a large number of fighters leaving their homes and joining extremist groups such as ISIL, and the growth of extremism efforts only seem to be growing in the MENA region. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime worked with the states in this region to help strengthen governmental ability to prevent this growth, and there is even an initiative to create a Multi-Agency Task Force in this region aiming to reinforce cooperation in terrorism matters and tools.⁵⁵

The Arab League also created a Counterterrorism Committee of the League of Arab States, resolving to fight against terrorism in the region in regard to economic, ideological, social, and security threats. Through the Arab Strategy to Combat Terrorism in 1997 and the Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism, Member States of the Arab League are working to commit themselves to UN efforts to fight extremism.⁵⁶

East Asia and Oceania

The response from this region comes from the conventions of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), where the APEC Counterterrorism Task Force (APEC CTTE) was founded in 2003. The Task Force was created to focus on five main things: coordinate the implementation of commitments to fighting terrorism and enhancing human security; assist members to identify and assess counter-terrorism needs; coordinate capacity building and

technical assistance programs; cooperate with relevant international and regional organizations; facilitate cooperation between APEC on counter-terrorism issues.⁵⁷

Importantly, APEC has created Trade Recovery Programs to prevent terrorist activity from disrupting commercial and financial structures.⁵⁸ While financial securities are not the priority for counterterrorism efforts, it is crucial to note that terrorist organizations can completely disrupt economic institutions. APEC CTTE therefore works to ensure that commerce and economic security are protected in their region from terrorist threats. It has been reported in the past that groups such as ISIL have illegally accessed accounts and funds to repurpose for their own activities, and ISIL has been known to do this with banks in its zone of de facto control.⁵⁹

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and NATO Global Partners

Although not every response to extremist groups for NATO states have been coordinated through NATO, their origins and policies remain similar. Article 5 of the Treaty, invoking collective defense, was activated for the first and only time in history in response to the September 11 attacks in the US.⁶⁰ As a result of this attack, NATO states, mainly in North America and Western Europe, have some of most comprehensive and complex counter-terrorism infrastructures in place. American, Canadian, and British armed forces have also been extensively deployed across the Middle East with the intent of eliminating radicalized leaders. The European Union (EU) also adopted the 2002 council framework decision which defines the definitions and legality necessary to pursue counter-radical policy.⁶¹

It is also critical to recognize the rise of white extremist attacks in western, NATO states. In the past few years, the rise of right-wing, white extremist, unorganized terrorists have come to the forefront. Nearly 39,000 deaths in the US alone were a result of gun violence, while in 2018 there were around 24,000 deaths as a result of Islamic terrorist attacks by groups like ISIL and the Taliban.⁶² Unfortunately, leaders like President Trump ignore this epidemic, and the problem continues to get worse. As a bloc, these nations must come to an understanding of how to unpack the chaos now innate to their individual countries and as a collective regional body.

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

The Commonwealth of Independent States coordination on counterterrorism began with a framework through the 1999 Treaty on Cooperation among the States Members of the CIS in Combating Terrorism. This established necessary legal development for specifying and criminalizing radical extremism. Most CIS nations turn to Russia for strategic leadership, and Russia has recognized Islamic Radicalism as a key security threat. Russian legislation has therefore expanded anti-radical legal codes to include forcing data storage for telecommunication companies. For other CIS states, primary concerns are focused on the easy access that radicalized organizations have over transnational borders, and the susceptibility of CIS state Muslims to growing pressure from ISIL propaganda.⁶³

Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)

Latin American and Caribbean states differ from the rest of the world in their counter-radicalization infrastructure largely due to the prevailing dominance of a primarily leftist form of radicalization. Continued insurgencies including Peru's Shining Path, the National Liberation

Army of Colombia, and the Paraguayan People's Army remain active today since their founding in the 1960s.⁶⁴ Leftist radicalization is primarily for economic purposes, and therefore CELAC member states are more likely to push for policies that fight large economic imbalances rather than political instability. Legal frameworks for counter-terrorism efforts for these countries have been established under the Organization of American States, being included in treaties such as the Convention to Prevent and Punish the Acts of Terrorism Take the Forms of Crimes Against Person and Related Extortion that are of International Significance (1971) and the Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism (2002).⁶⁵

Questions to Consider

1. How can Islamic extremism and prominent Islamic extremist groups be stopped while also respecting religious freedom and upholding national sovereignty and cultural autonomy?
2. What will it take for Western nations to address the problems with right-wing, white radicalization in their own nations, and how will this form of extremism be quelled given it is an informal network of white terrorists? What happens if Western nations fail to address their own problems, and how should the international community respond?
3. How can the United Nations actually take true action against non-state actors, and how can the United Nations address state-sponsored terrorism? What balance can this body strike in determining where efforts and resources should be allocated?

4. What factors are conducive to this clear rise in extremism, and how exactly can they be reduced in the future on the global stage?

Further Reading

Beyond just the brief context provided in this guide, delegates must consider the broader implications that this topic holds. The deeply embedded suffering and pain that terrorism and violent extremism have caused makes this an extremely sensitive topic, and involving the important, yet often neglected, case of white nationalist extremism makes this topic relevant to a larger majority of the world. In preparing for this topic, delegates need to research and think creatively in order to come up with solutions that will both be effective and respectful. Understanding how to treat non-state actors in a resolution will be critical to this topic. Generalizations must be avoided, and research must be done in a way in which the causes of extremism are considered as much as the impacts are. There should be no emphasis on one form of extremism over any other addressed throughout the guide, but rather a resolution that addresses the overarching problems with radicalized extremism that exists in the world today. In approaching this topic with sensitivity and diligent research, delegates will effectively create important, impactful resolutions.

Topic II: Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East

INTRODUCTION

The threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) is not a new one. Since the beginning of the Cold War in the 1950s, the possibility of nuclear warfare has been looming over the entire world. But by looking at proliferation specifically in the Middle East, a notably conflicted, divisive region, this threat seems that much more pressing. Israel, an already divisive nation in the Middle East, is one of five nations that has not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Iran, despite being a party to the NPT, has consistently been found in noncompliance, and has a long history of dishonesty and concerning behavior regarding their nuclear program. Discussions of establishing a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East has been around since 1995 but has yet to come to fruition. It is the job of this body to find a solution that can be universally supported, and that is accepted by every nation in the region while still being effective. In what follows, the nuances behind the complex history of nuclear programs in the Middle East are explored, followed by the impact that history has on the present state of the region. In understanding the failures of achieving non-proliferation in the past, delegates can look to the current state of the issue in the context of the past to avoid repeating such drastic shortcomings. Ultimately, this body must think creatively and work cooperatively in order to even begin down a path of non-proliferation. Delegates must decide if a NWFZ in the Middle East is the best and only solution, and if so, how it will be achieved.

History

Proliferation in the Middle East is centered around Iran's nuclear program. The nation's interest in nuclear technology began in the 1950s when the Shah of Iran received technical assistance under the U.S. Atoms for Peace program.⁶⁶ This program was established under

President Eisenhower in 1953 to create a platform where different countries could peacefully share nuclear materials and technology.⁶⁷ This peaked Iranian interest in nuclear technology, eventually leading them to develop a comprehensive nuclear fuel cycle. However, Iran's initial efforts to develop a nuclear program were fairly slow, losing much of its traction in the face of the Iranian Revolution in 1979. Most of the progress that had been made since the 1950s had been reversed as the work on nuclear projects was completely and abruptly ended in the wake of the revolution.⁶⁸



⁶⁹ The 1979 Iranian Revolution, simply put, was a revolt against the dictatorial state. The entire nation united under the common goal of removing the Shah's power. The chaos and intensity of

the Iranian Revolution, while unifying at the time, led to divergence within the nation shortly after, and religion began to dominate the country once again.⁷⁰ Unfortunately, much of Iran's nuclear talent fled the country in the wake of the Revolution and almost caused the nuclear

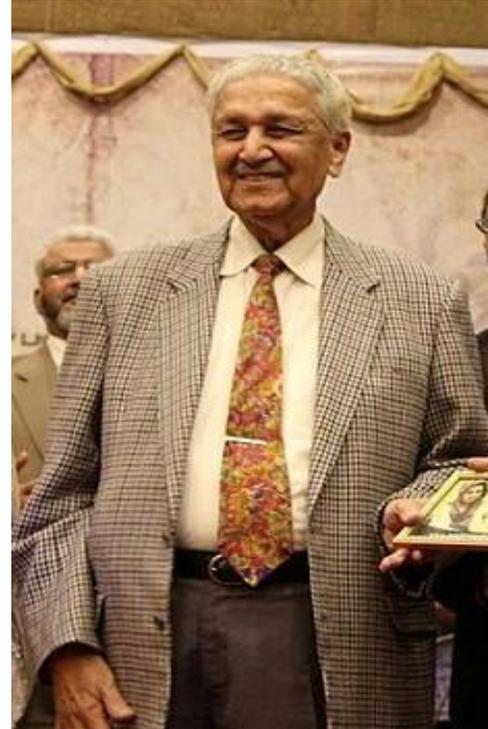
program to entirely disappear.⁷¹ U.S. President Carter imposed the first United States sanctions against Iran in November 1979 through Executive Order 12170 after radical students took hostages inside the American embassy.⁷²

In 1984, Khomeini, the Iranian revolutionary who took power after the Iranian Revolution, renewed the nation's interest in nuclear power. The program was really reinvigorated in the late 1980s after the war with Iraq, and Iran signed long-term nuclear cooperation agreements with Pakistan and China, in 1987 and 1990 respectively.⁷³ At this point in history, the U.S. government was highly suspicious of Iran's nuclear activity, worried it was using its civilian nuclear program as a cover for their development of nuclear weapons. This concern stopped China from supplying Iran with technologies they needed to progress their development.⁷⁴ In 1995, however, Iran made an agreement with Russia, and Moscow developed the research reactor project instead of China.⁷⁵ The next year, U.S. President Bill Clinton passed an embargo on Iran for trying to acquire nuclear weapons.⁷⁶

It is believed that Israel also began its nuclear program in the mid-1950s. In 1958, American U-2 spy plane confirmed the existence of Israel's Dimona nuclear complex in the Negev Desert, but U.S. inspections of Israeli nuclear sites in the 1960s proved largely unsuccessful due to restrictions placed on inspectors.⁷⁷ With French assistance, Israel was able to develop a nuclear weapons program in the 1950s in order to defend themselves against what they saw as an existential threat from its Arab neighbors.⁷⁸ Because of the heightened tension that Israel has with other Middle Eastern states, the nation claims they need nuclear weapons as the

“ultimate deterrent.”⁷⁹ And, because of their need for this deterrence, their nuclear program has always remained relatively vague and mysterious to the international community.

⁸⁰ Pakistan’s nuclear weapons program was established in 1972 and gained momentum after India’s 1974 testing of a nuclear “device.”⁸¹ Their program drastically changed with the return of A.Q. Khan, a German-trained metallurgist. Over several decades, his work would lead to the proliferation of gas centrifuges to a large number of soon-to-be nuclear powers including Iran, North Korea, and Libya.⁸² Later, the nation announced successful conduction of five nuclear tests in 1998, and its program was based predominantly on highly enriched uranium.⁸³ Like Israel, Pakistan claims the Pakistani bomb exists in the interest of self-defense. Their nuclear program is important to keep in mind when looking at Middle Eastern nuclear programs given Dr. A.Q. Khan’s



Dr. A.Q. Khan

important contributions to the advancement of nuclear technology.

Proliferation in the Middle East was brought to the forefront of international discussion when the United States invaded Iraq in 2003 because they believed Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Yet, in the first year of the American invasion, evidence showed that Saddam Hussein had no weapons of mass destruction.⁸⁴ In the midst of this war, that many Americans quickly saw as a mistake, Iran was ordered to suspend its nuclear program.⁸⁵ To avoid referral to

the UN Security Council, Iran began negotiations with the EU-3 (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom), and agreed in October 2003 to cooperate with the IAEA, sign the Additional Protocol, and temporarily suspend conversion and enrichment activities.⁸⁶ However, in 2004 both the CIA and the IAEA found evidence that Iran was continuing to work on its nuclear program, and despite Iran's original denial, they ultimately admitted they had continued developing weapons.⁸⁷ Diplomacy collapsed in 2005 when Iran informed the IAEA it would continue uranium conversion activities. U.S. President Bush then signed Executive Order 13382, blocking the financial assets of individuals and entities supporting WMD development.⁸⁸

The Non-Proliferation Treaty was officially adopted in 1968 and was extended indefinitely in 1995 under the stipulation that there would be a review conference for it every five years. In 2015, the review conference was seen as a failure, mainly because the parties to the treaty could not reach an agreement on any resolution. The failure can be attributed to the contentious discussion around creating a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East.⁸⁹ Despite the failure of this one conference, the NPT remains at the center of non-proliferation efforts on an international scale. The fragmentation of its members pose deep problems for the future of what non-proliferation efforts might look like, and the responsibility of this body must be focused on understanding where each member can unite to create a safer, more peaceful Middle East through the goals of the NPT—or, on the other hand, questioning if those goals are even worth still considering in the status quo.

Issue

Not many Middle Eastern states developed nuclear programs in the past, but the attention on Iran and the nation's drive to continue strengthening their program has led to at least twelve other Middle Eastern nations to either announce plans to explore atomic energy or sign nuclear cooperation agreements. There is a deep concern among the international community that these states will follow in Iran's path, and that they feel a need to develop their own arms out of fear of Iran's nuclear program. The difficulty on behalf of the international community in preventing Tehran from achieving its nuclear potential has only exacerbated the fears of the rest of the Middle East. In order to prevent even more Middle Eastern states from developing their own nuclear programs, the rest of the world must understand how to prevent more development of Iran's nuclear program and not allow history to repeat itself.

Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Egypt, the UAE, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Syria, Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman have made announcements about their own plans to explore nuclear options.⁹⁰ Libya and Yemen have made such announcements but have since cancelled their nuclear programs. Of course, like Iran, they have also all explicitly stated they are solely interested in peaceful uses of nuclear technology.⁹¹

The best efforts made by the world stage to curb Tehran's work is the Iran Nuclear Deal. The negotiators aimed to reduce Iran's ability to put uranium and plutonium, the two types of radioactive materials that can make an atomic bomb, in weapons. U-235, the "fissile" radioactive isotope of uranium, accounts for less than 1 percent of uranium mined.⁹² Plutonium is made by irradiating uranium in a nuclear reactor, and Pu-239 is the primary fissile isotope of plutonium used for the production of nuclear weapons.⁹³ Most power reactors in the West enrich uranium

up to 5 percent; in Iran, they process uranium up to 20 percent enrichment.⁹⁴ The power that these Iranian weapons hold are incredibly threatening to the entire global community, and are even more dangerous given Iran's unpredictability and unreliability in committing to agreements to stop nuclear development.⁹⁵



The Iran Nuclear Deal, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was signed in 2015, with Iran agreeing to

provide the IAEA with greater access and information regarding its nuclear program, and to take steps to stop developing such dangerous weaponry. Specifically, Iran agreed to redesign and rebuild the Arak reactor, a Heavy Water nuclear reactor located in northeastern Iran.⁹⁶ Heavy Water, a form of water containing larger than normal amounts of hydrogen isotope deuterium, is notably useful in its ability to produce and enrich weapons grade plutonium.⁹⁷ In 2009, the IAEA gained access to the facility but Iran refused to provide access to detailed plans and kept the purpose of the plant relatively unclear.⁹⁸ The timeline of the agreement requires Iran to reduce its current stockpile of low-enriched uranium by 98 percent, and limits Iran's enrichment capacity and research and development for 15 years, with some transparency measures in place for as long as 25 years.

There were suspicions around the JCPOA, however, because the deal freed billions of dollars that Iran then used to spread its influence, predominantly in the Middle East. By accepting temporary nuclear restrictions, Iran immediately got permanent benefits up-front. UN and some EU sanctions had been lifted, also enabling the state to access previously frozen assets. And, before the U.S. withdrawal, America had ceased applying nuclear-related sanctions.⁹⁹ Since the JCPOA was implemented and before the U.S. withdrawal, Iran had signed over \$100 billion in contracts with foreign companies.¹⁰⁰ This money and sanctions relief only enabled Iran to gain more and more power in the Middle East, leading many to question the cost of Iranian imperialism over the threat of their ambiguous nuclear program.¹⁰¹

In 2018, things changed dramatically when President Trump withdrew from the JCPOA. Since 2015, despite the many suspicions around the deal, it successfully rolled back much of Iran's nuclear capabilities and put its activities under tight watch. The deal quelled concerns about Tehran's nuclear ambitions and seemed to be putting the world back on the right path in terms of its illicit use of atomic weapons. Instead of Trump's belief that American withdrawal from the deal would put "maximum pressure" on Iran, U.S. withdrawal has only worsened the situation as this new policy has sharply heightened tensions in the Persian Gulf and decreased Iran's incentives to continue complying with the JCPOA.¹⁰²



SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS.COM | CENTRAL BANK OF IRAN

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Iranian GDP Annual Growth Rate

When the U.S. moved to further tighten sanctions in an effort to drive Iranian oil exports to zero, Iran announced it would no longer adhere to the JCPOA.¹⁰⁴ In July of 2019, Iran exceeded the agreed-upon limits to its stockpile of low-enriched uranium, and began enriching uranium to the higher concentration used on medical isotopes. The sanctions imposed on Iran in the wake of U.S. withdrawal has significantly impacted the Iranian economy, with plummeting oil exportations.¹⁰⁵ However, it is still in question whether or not the economic damage of these sanctions have hurt the Iranian economy enough to bring them to renegotiate a new deal on U.S. terms. After Trump withdrew from the JCPOA, many of the Middle Eastern states mentioned above, most prominently Saudi Arabia, significantly increased their steps towards developing, or strengthening, their individual nuclear programs in an effort to try and match the nuclear capabilities of Iran when they have no deal to be tied down to.¹⁰⁶ After the United States airstrike attack in Iraq killing a top Iranian commander, General Qassem Suleimani, Iran completely

ended its commitment to the JCPOA and would therefore no longer limit its enrichment of uranium at all.¹⁰⁷

In the face of declining United States influence in the Middle East in relation to their withdrawal from the JCPOA, the resurgence of Russian influence and the rising power of China have become significant to nuclear diplomacy in the Middle East. China and Russia, growing in their economic powers in the Middle East, subscribe to similar policies in regard to their nuclear exports, with both countries never explicitly stating they would not be open to the exportation of enrichment technology.¹⁰⁸ The United States' nuclear export doctrine, their gold standard, has enabled China and Russia to dominate the civil nuclear import conversation. Additionally, civil nuclear cooperation is an official aspect of China's Belt and Road Initiative and coincides with much of the effort on behalf of China and Middle Eastern states to combat climate change.¹⁰⁹

While China's relationship with the Middle East revolves around energy demand and the Belt and Road Initiative, their growing influence in the region economically and politically raises concerns for the rest of the international community. The United States continues to hold significant political influence in the region, but as China's economic power grows among MENA states, this has the potential to change.¹¹⁰ Both China and Russia worked together to protect the Syrian regime during the nation's civil war, and while this stemmed from a desire to uphold their principle of non-interference, the cooperation between China and Russia when it comes to Middle Eastern states could possibly become a threat.¹¹¹ In the face of uncertain nuclear programs, especially in Iran, the relations between China, Russia, and the Middle East must be closely looked at.

The changing relationship between the United States and the Middle East, and particularly Iran, are critical to consider as well. After the recent assassination of Qassem Soleimani, there is an added heightened tension between the United States and Iran. This extreme escalation following the U.S. airstrike in Iraq has led to suspicions of Iranian preparation of ballistic missile units and has raised questions of possible warfare in the near future.¹¹² The fragile role the United States now holds in this region and in Iran must be dealt with while discussing the issue of proliferation in the Middle East, as the outbreak of another war in the region and the question of nuclear warfare can become dangerous realities when it comes to these two countries.

Today, there are only five countries who have not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: India, Pakistan, Israel, South Sudan, and North Korea.¹¹³ The only nations allowed to have nuclear weapons are defined in the treaty as Nuclear Weapons States, and include only the P5: America, Russia, China, France, and the United Kingdom.¹¹⁴ And, while Iran has been a party to the NPT since 1970, it has been found in noncompliance numerous times, and therefore the status of its nuclear program remains highly disputed. Iran has even threatened to quit the treaty in the face of extreme tension with the U.S. and Europe if the 2015 treaty really does unravel, which it does appear to be doing.¹¹⁵ This is important to consider when discussing this topic as one of the five nations who has not signed the treaty is in the Middle East, and one member of the treaty, Iran, is an incredibly unreliable nation in terms of nuclear power. How to address the faults and gaps of the NPT will be a necessary question to consider.

Looking beyond Iran, Israel is the only official nuclear power in the Middle East and presents “strategic ambiguity,” a way where they neither deny nor admit to a nuclear-weapons program.¹¹⁶ Today, Israel is believed to possess between 80 to 200 nuclear warheads and enough material for over 100 additional bombs.¹¹⁷ This has become a problem for Israel as other Middle Eastern states, primarily Egypt, have been calling for a Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East.¹¹⁸ A resolution by the IAEA attempting to refer Iran to the UN Security Council was delayed because of this very clause inserted by Egypt because it called for a nuclear-weapons-free Middle East, clearly directed at Israel.¹¹⁹ An NWFZ in the Middle East would commit nations not to possess, acquire, test, manufacture, or use any nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons as well as any delivery systems as stipulated in the NPT.¹²⁰ Egypt also drafted a resolution at the NPT conference calling on Israel to join the accord, cosponsored by many Middle Eastern states worried about the existence of Israeli nuclear facilities in their region.¹²¹ Garnering significant support from Arab, Islamic, and non-aligned states, Egypt sparked yet another important division between much of the Middle East and Israel: most of the region desperately wants Israel to sign the NPT, and Israel genuinely believes it cannot due to outside threats.¹²²

In order for Israel to support an NWFZ in the Middle East, the nation maintained that an Israel-Arab peace settlement must be a pre-condition.¹²³ Therefore, Israel would only support such an effort as merely a final touch on a comprehensive plan for peace in the Middle East. At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the Treaty parties created an action plan for a Middle East NWFZ, singling out Israel by calling for “all states in the Middle East that have not yet done so



to accede to the [NPT] as non-nuclear weapons States so as to achieve its universality at an early date.”¹²⁴ Israel publicly rejected the resolution, calling it “deeply flawed and hypocritical.”¹²⁵ Addressing Israel’s nuclear weapons program delicately will be critical to

making real change.

Understanding the state’s intentional ambiguity and difficult situation in relation to other Middle Eastern countries is of the utmost importance when looking at nonproliferation in the region.

Past UN Action

The ultimate goal of the United Nations is to establish the Middle East as a NWFZ. Currently, there are nine nuclear-free zones: the Antarctic, outer space, Latin America and the Caribbean, the seabed, the South Pacific, the ASEAN nations, Mongolia, Central Asia, and Africa.¹²⁶ The UN has presented a number of resolutions, including: *A/RES/67/28*, attempting to establish an NWFZ in the Middle East in 2012; *A/67/412*, calling on Israel to join the NPT; *Security Council Resolution 1540*, recognizing the threat of non-state proliferation; *Security Council Resolution 1887*, calling upon all member countries to adhere to the NPT, cooperate with the IAEA, and establish domestic measures to reduce nuclear weapons stockpiles.¹²⁷

Relevant international treaties and policies are also important to take note of. These include the NPT, Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, No First Use, Middle East Nuclear

Weapons Free Zone (MENFWZ), and New START Treaty.¹²⁸ The No First Use is an important policy for both India and Pakistan have explicitly pledged to use nuclear weapons only in a defensive manner. The United States refuses to make a non-first use pledge.¹²⁹

Key Actors and BLOC Positions

There are three Middle Eastern nations leading the charge on the main sides of this issue: Egypt, Iran, and Israel. Egypt is the strongest proponent supporting a MENWFZ, seeing it as a necessary means of pressure on Israel to relinquish its ambiguous nuclear policy, and hopefully sign the NPT.¹³⁰ Iran has made an effort to show its public support for the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East, but because of the fragile state of the JCPOA and the government's constant lack of reliability and transparency with their nuclear program, the country's support for a MENWFZ has never been very significant. Additionally, Iran rejects the idea of Western intervention in the process, especially intervention by the United States.¹³¹ Israel's position is fairly distinct from the other two, as the country sees nonproliferation as just a small part of a much more comprehensive plan to achieve peace in the Middle East, including Palestinian issues.¹³² Israel's stance does not support a MENWFZ unless there is a complete peace plan alongside it.

Outside of Middle Eastern nations, much of the world strongly supports a MENWFZ. The United States, the United Kingdom, and Russia introduced a resolution endorsing an NWFZ in the Middle East at the 1995 NPT Review Conference which was agreed upon by all NPT parties.¹³³ The United States and the United Kingdom both support a MENWFZ, but also emphasize that such an initiative must be supported and accepted by all states in the region, with

equal participation.¹³⁴ The different sides that exist do not exist out of opposition, but rather out of diverging ideas for how a MENWFZ should actually be implemented. There are very few, if any, nations that outright do not support the establishment of the Middle East as a NWFZ, but every side has a different idea of how it should best be implemented.

Questions to Consider

1. Is the NPT an effective enough document to help achieve non-proliferation internationally, or even just in the Middle East? If not, what needs to be changed, and how?
2. Is a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East the most effective solution, or the most realistic, to achieving non-proliferation in the region?
3. Given that Israel is not a party to the NPT, how can they effectively contribute to the discussion of non-proliferation in the same way that other Middle Eastern states can? How can the world stage work to compromise with them without the platform of the NPT, and without forcing them to become a party to it?
4. With the fragility of the JCPOA and the relationship between the United States and Iran, how should this body approach Iran's role in this issue, and how much can their nuclear program—or alleged lack thereof—be trusted?
5. How should Iran's nuclear history and current problems with the JCPOA be looked at, and how can this body reduce the threat and anonymity of Iran's nuclear program to appease the rest of the Middle East and their growing fears? Simultaneously, how can the

threat of Iran's nuclear program be reduced while also ensuring they do not gain more power in other ways as they did through the JCPOA?

Further Readings

In addition to the information provided in this background guide, delegates should prepare themselves by doing personal research on their own country assignments, familiarize themselves with the political and economic contexts of proliferation internationally and specifically in the Middle East, and, importantly for this specific topic, keep up with current events. In understanding individual roles and experiences with proliferation, informed, lively debate can occur. Additionally, by learning about both the political and economic significance of nuclear programs, the role of many countries and many different relationships will inform delegates of what their discussion and ideation process should look like both before and during committee. Lastly, the constantly changing state of international affairs and Middle Eastern affairs makes it especially crucial that delegates pay attention to current events. The recent United States airstrike assassinating a powerful Iranian commander in January will leave a powerful impact on the state of this topic and will likely evolve by the time this committee begins in April. By keeping this in mind, appropriate, thoughtful, and timely solutions can be proposed during the conference.

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