

HCCRI XII STUDY GUIDE

UNSC



DYNAMIC
AGENDA



WELCOME LETTER

Dear Delegates,

A warm welcome to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)! We are your chairs, Li Song, Clive and Winnie, and we are excited to have you onboard for an enriching experience at HCCRI 2023!

The UNSC is widely known for its mission to enforce international peace and security, and has been tasked with the key responsibility of resolving conflicts around the world with the rise of tensions in recent years. In this iteration of HCCRI, delegates will be embarking on a dynamic agenda of discussion in council, with fluid updates concerning the issues at hand to challenge delegates' grasp of content. The chairs sincerely hope that after the conference, delegates will be able to gain a deeper insight into international law, as well as the role of the UNSC in resolving multi-faceted conflicts.

Should you have any doubts during the preparation phase, do feel free to contact us via hccri23.unsc@gmail.com. We wish you the best of luck for the conference, and we look forward to seeing you soon!

Best Regards,
Chairs of the UNSC

DAIS INTRODUCTION

HEAD CHAIR: WONG LI SONG

Coffee, tea or Coca Cola? As a JC1 student in Hwa Chong Institution, Li Song's mind is often bombarded with such questions to stimulate his brain cells in the absence of caffeine. His first foray into Model United Nations was three years ago, and needless to say, he has since come far from his days as a confused delegate. Nonetheless, Li Song hopes that every delegate will be able to step out of their comfort zones, and looks forward to an invigorating experience with his delegates during the conference!

DEPUTY CHAIR: CLIVE GO

A new JC1 student in Hwa Chong Institution, Clive often ponders over life's biggest question, how do I sleep 8 hours a night? When he isn't contemplating over sleep, Clive often is seen either gaming, eating, or vibing to his Taylor Swift playlist. Having started his MUN journey as a Secretariat member 2 years ago, it's fair to say that MUN has now become an essential part of his life. Clive hopes all delegates will enjoy their experience, and be able to take away wonderful memories from the conference!

DAIS INTRODUCTION

DEPUTY CHAIR: LIU RUI YI WINNIE

Winnie loves to seek thrill. Be it surfing, skating or taking part in a chemistry olympiad. Thrilling, right? She is often found reading a book, chilling by the beach, or both. As much as she tries to make it seem like she has a life, her friends assert that she is a mugging workaholic most of the time. Nevertheless, she hopes that delegates will enjoy their time with us in HCCRI UNSC.

I. INTRODUCTION TO COUNCIL

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) serves as one of the six main organs of the United Nations, with its primary responsibility being to maintain international peace and security.¹ The UNSC holds significant power, being the only body in the United Nations with the authority to pass legally binding resolutions, which can authorise the use of military force and trigger mechanisms such as economic sanctions. The UNSC is also a diplomatic forum exploring ways to settle disputes.

The United National Security Council comprises 15 members, with 5 permanent members and 10 non-permanent members. The United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, Russia and China serve as the Council's 5 permanent members. Member states of the United Nations are elected to serve 2 year terms as non-permanent members of the Council.² The 5 permanent members have veto powers – the casting of a dissenting vote by any of them causes a resolution to be failed automatically.

¹ United Nations (n.d.). United Nations Security Council |. United Nations. Retrieved February 12, 2023, from <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/>

² United Nations (n.d.). Security Council. United Nations. Retrieved February 12, 2023, from <https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/security-council>

II. HISTORY

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The League of Nations was established on 10 January 1920, and served as the world's first intergovernmental organisation.³ It was established as part of the Treaty of Versailles after the conclusion of the First World War, with its aims being fostering closer ties between nations, and preventing future wars through mediation and negotiation. The League of Nations also endeavoured to tackle issues which affected the global community at that time, such as poverty and human trafficking.

Ultimately, the League of Nations proved unsuccessful in preventing future wars, with its inability to act swiftly and decisively against the Axis powers. As the League did not have its own military force, it relied on member states to enforce its decisions. However, most of these states were unwilling to provide military support.⁴

In addition, nations which chose not to join the League of Nations did not need to follow the League's decisions and recommendations, hence rendering the League of Nations ineffective in influencing the decisions and actions of such nations. Moreover, nations which joined the League of Nations also did not have the need to follow the directions of the League, as the League adopted a system where votes had to be unanimous among all member states in order for a ruling to pass. This made it impossible for the League to pass any concrete rulings, as nations still maintained their own vested interests and made it impossible for any unanimous decision to be made.

II. HISTORY

At its peak, the League comprised 58 nations, including the United Kingdom, France, Japan and Italy. The United States of America was never a member, and the Soviet Union only joined the League in 1934, but was subsequently expelled in 1939.⁵ The US was never able to join the LON due to a lack of domestic support and significant pushback from the Republican party, as they feared further involvement in international politics after WW1. On the other hand, the USSR was forcefully expelled from the organisation due to its unjustified invasion of Finland. Such a reality showed that nations still prioritised their own national interests over the common goals of the LON, choosing to put isolationism over globalism. This was significant, as the unwillingness for both superpowers to join the LON caused the organisation itself to lack legitimacy, as well as being unable to tap onto the resources of both superpowers for its enforcement capabilities. In particular, the decision of the United States of America not to join the League weakened it significantly, as the League then lacked credibility and military superiority.

II. HISTORY

However, the League was seen to be a success in other aspects. Notably, its humanitarian efforts provided significant aid to refugees, and it extended financial aid to developing countries.⁶ In the 1920s, The League of Nations helped half a million prisoners of war return home and in 1926, the League approved the Slavery Convention, freeing over 200,000 slaves. The League of Nations was dissolved in 1946, but it served as a model for the eventual establishment of the modern United Nations. Several of the humanitarian and societal initiatives proposed by the League of Nations were eventually carried out by the United Nations, including the continuation of the International Labour Organisation.

After the outbreak of World War 2, it became clear that the League was unable to fulfil its aims of disarmament and collective security. Thus, the League of Nations was disbanded and replaced by the United Nations.

³ Tomuschat, C. (1995). The United Nations at age Fifty. Google Books. Kluwer Law International. Retrieved February 12, 2023, from https://books.google.com.sg/booksid=iz55RRayP34C&pg=PA77&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false.

⁴ BBC. (2016). Failures of the League of Nations in the 1930s - paris peace treaties and the League of Nations, to 1933 - national 5 history revision - BBC bitesize. BBC News. Retrieved February 12, 2023, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zbg4t39/revision/9#:~:text=The%2Ofailures%2Of%2Othe%2OLeague.of%2Othe%2OSecond%2OWorld%2OWar.>

⁵ Khan Academy. (2016). The League of Nations (article) | khan academy. Khan Academy. Retrieved February 12, 2023, from <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/rise-to-world-power/us-in-wwi/a/the-league-of-nations>.

⁶ Infoplease. (n.d.). League of Nations: Infoplease. Retrieved February 12, 2023, from <https://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/social-science/government/un/league-of-nations/successes-and-failures#:~:text=Successes%2Oand%2OFailures&text=In%2Oaddition%2C%2Othe%2OLeague%2Oextended,relations%2Oand%2Omany%2Oother%2Ofields.>

II. HISTORY

1943 MOSCOW CONFERENCE

The Moscow Conference was held from October 18 to November 11 1943 at the Moscow Kremlin and Spiridonovka Palace, with it being the first time that the major superpowers of the world could meet. Representatives from the United Kingdom, United States and the Soviet Union participated in a series of meetings held towards the end of World War Two, discussing strategies to ending the war with the Axis Powers and the establishment of a new world order post war.⁷ After the conference, declarations relating to the role of Italy and Austria in the war as well as the treatment of German individuals suspected to be involved in wartime atrocities in a postwar world were written.

Most significantly, the Moscow Conference was the first time that a formal agreement was in place for the immediate creation of a new international organisation, laying a concrete foundation for the eventual development and establishment of the modern United Nations.

⁷ States, U., Kingdom, U., China, & Union, S. (n.d.). Joint Four Nation Declaration. Moscow Conference, October, 1943. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from <http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1943/431000a.html>

II. HISTORY

1943 TEHRAN CONFERENCE

The Tehran Conference was held in December 1943 with the "Big Three" i.e. Joseph Stalin, Franklin Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill, who were leaders of the Soviet Union, the United States, and the United Kingdom respectively. With the common enemies of Germany and Japan, they cooperated well and joined their forces eagerly. The 3 countries discussed their plans against Germany and Japan, and coordinated their tactics to achieve more successful results. This conference was significant as it demonstrates the Western Allies' commitment to open a Western front against Nazi Germany.

Next, the United States expressed their goal to set up an organisation consisting of these four superpowers: United States, United Kingdom, China, and Soviet Union, to gain more control over the United Nations. This cooperation would allow them to "have the power to deal immediately with any threat to the peace and any sudden emergency which requires action", as stated by Roosevelt. The Soviet Union was very receptive to this proposal. As for the United States, gaining the support of Stalin allowed them to feel assured that they have formed a strong alliance built on confidence and trust.

II. HISTORY

1945 YALTA CONFERENCE

The Yalta Conference was a meeting between the three World War II Allies, the United States, United Kingdom and Soviet Union, which served as a platform after the 1944 Dumbarton Oaks Conference to further discuss the formation and the operation of the United Nations.⁸ During the conference, all three nations agreed to join the United Nations and send delegates to the 1945 San Francisco Conference,⁹ in which it is worthy to note that the Soviet Union only gave their commitment after all three leaders had agreed on a plan in which all permanent members of the UNSC would hold veto power,¹⁰ demonstrating how veto power used to be and potentially still remains as an important bargaining chip for permanent members to remain in UNSC.

⁸ Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. (n.d.). Yalta conference. Encyclopædia Britannica. Retrieved April 3, 2023, from <https://www.britannica.com/event/Yalta-Conference>

⁹ Luckhurst, T. (2020, February 4). Yalta: World War Two Summit that reshaped the world. BBC News. Retrieved April 3, 2023, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-51282716>

¹⁰ Yalta conference: Definition, date & outcome - history. (n.d.). Retrieved April 3, 2023, from <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/yalta-conference>

II. HISTORY

1945 SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE

The 1945 San Francisco Conference, more commonly known as the United Nations Conference on International Organisation, was a conference that considered four areas pertaining to the establishment of the United Nations: the plans proposed during the Dumbarton Oaks Conference, suggested amendments to the aforementioned proposals, a draft addition to the plan providing for a trusteeship system for dependent areas as well as the preliminary studies on the creation of an International Court of Justice.¹¹ During the conference, the issue of veto power issued to the permanent members of the Security Council was one of the main issues that could not be agreed upon, as the smaller nations were concerned about the council's transparency in terms of its rationale behind the decisions made when permanent members acted against international peace and security.¹² The smaller nations attempted to restrict veto powers of the council, expand the powers of the General Assembly as well as give the General Assembly the autonomy and power to interpret the UN Charter,¹³ in an attempt to ensure that there are checks and balances in place to prevent domination of the UNSC by P5 nations. Eventually, it was deemed that the smaller nations were unsuccessful in their efforts, as the great powers retained their supremacy in the UNSC.¹⁴

¹¹ Register of the united nations conference on international organization proceedings. Online Archive of California. (n.d.). Retrieved April 3, 2023, from https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf2f59n5jz/entire_text/

¹² Plett, B. (2012, May 19). Small countries call for more transparency at the United Nations. BBC News. Retrieved April 3, 2023, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-18123768>

¹³ Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. (n.d.). San Francisco conference. Encyclopædia Britannica. Retrieved April 3, 2023, from <https://www.britannica.com/event/San-Francisco-Conference>

¹⁴ Ibid

III. MANDATE & POWERS

PEACEKEEPING FORCES

The deployment of peacekeeping forces is one way the United Nations Security Council exercises its responsibility to uphold international peace and security. Once a peace agreement has been reached, the parties involved may make use of the United Nations' peacekeeping forces to oversee the maintenance of peace and the process of nation building. In addition, Article 42 of the UN Charter states that should the UN determine the existence of any threat to peace and measures in Article 41 are insufficient to deal with such a threat, the UN may take direct military action by air, land or sea to maintain and enforce peace. The UN peacekeeping force consists of members of the military, police and civilian personnel in order to perform various functions. As it is entirely managed and organised by the UN, its neutrality and impartiality is ensured during peacekeeping operations. This is in accordance with the UN Peacekeeping Operations Capstone doctrine, which highlights legitimacy, neutrality and local ownership as three key factors for a successful peacekeeping operation.

Peacekeeping forces will only be deployed after a thorough process of consultations among stakeholders as well as a technical assessment of the situation on the ground. Due to the versatile nature of the UN Peacekeeping force, the Security Council is able to deploy troops to a wide variety of situations, depending on the specific needs and interests of the country.

¹⁵ United Nations (n.d.). United Nations Peacekeeping. United Nations. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en>

III. MANDATE & POWERS

One example of a UN peacekeeping operation is the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala, a three month peacekeeping mission overseeing the conclusion to the Guatemalan civil war and the transition to peace.¹⁶ Civilian staff members of the UN, such as lawyers and human rights monitors, as well as policing staff, were deployed. Subsequently, military supervisors from nations such as Australia, Canada, Russia and the United States of America were deployed to Guatemala in order to oversee the implementation of the UN resolution on peace in Central America. While the overall effectiveness and success of the mission could be debated, it still played a crucial role in maintaining peace and the rule of law after an armed conflict which terrorised the nation, as well as monitoring and reporting on human rights abuses, helping strengthen the Guatemalan justice system.

The Guatemalan civil war was a bloody and brutal conflict which lasted from 1960 to 1996. After the signing of peace accords between the Guatemalan government and the opposing guerilla groups in 1996, UN peacekeeping troops were deployed to ensure the smooth and effective implementation of the accords. After the conclusion of such a long drawn conflict, it was crucial that the accords were implemented and being followed so as to prevent yet another conflict, thus warranting the deployment of UN Peacekeeping troops.

¹⁶ United Nations (n.d.). Report of the secretary-general on the group of military observers attached to minugua. United Nations. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/234426?ln=en>

III. MANDATE & POWERS

Although peaceful measures not involving the use of forces will be prioritised when UNSC is tasked to resolve international conflicts, Article 42 of the UN Charter mentions that the UNSC may take action including “operations by air, sea or land forces of members of the United Nations”.¹⁷ In 2021, the UNSC authorised the use of forces for several peacekeeping missions as well as multinational forces in a total of 9 countries, and reviewed the peacekeeping operations deployed in the individual regions. Generally, such missions involve peacekeeping troops overseeing the confirmation of ceasefires between nations, as well as acting in the interests of the UN to maintain peace in a specific region or area. In general, peacekeeping forces are authorised to use “all necessary means” to perform its mandated tasks.¹⁸

The question that is posed for every peacekeeping force deployed would be the mandate of the force, as individual peacekeeping forces will have different objectives and agendas to fulfil depending on the regions that they are deployed in. In further response to the powers and mandate that peacekeepers have when deployed, several member states, including China, Russia and India, stated that enforcement operations as well as any form of coercive measures have to be authorised by the council, and that resolving conflicts by peaceful means should always be prioritised over any other measures.

¹⁷ United Nations (n.d.). Charter of the United Nations. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from <https://legal.un.org/repertory/art41.shtml>

¹⁸ United Nations (2021). Actions with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression (Chapter VII of the Charter). Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council. Retrieved April 9, 2023, from

https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil/files/24th_suppl_part_vii_advance_version.pdf

III. MANDATE & POWERS

SEVERANCE OF DIPLOMATIC TIES

Article 41 of the UN Charter states that “The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the UN to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations.”¹⁹ Thus, article 41 allows for the Security Council to make use of means such as the severance of diplomatic ties in order to peacefully resolve disputes and conflicts between nations. The Security Council is able to make use of several different mechanisms to sever diplomatic relations with any nation, including the recalling of ambassadors and closing of embassies, as well as expulsion from the UN and other international organisations in more severe cases. Through the severance of diplomatic ties, the Security Council will be able to indirectly intervene by condemning the actions of a specific nation without the use of force. By suspending political and economic contacts between nations, this sends a clear message that actions by such nations will not be tolerated and that their nation will no longer be internationally recognised until they have made the necessary corrections.

¹⁹ United Nations (n.d.). Charter of the United Nations. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from <https://legal.un.org/repertory/art41.shtml>

III. MANDATE & POWERS

Examples include the measures implemented by the Security Council against Libya in 2011 in response to the country's violent suppression of anti-government protests. The Security Council expelled Libyan diplomats from other countries, as well as closing Libyan embassies and consuls. However, such limited measures were eventually futile as these protests eventually escalated into a full civil war.

Overall, the severance of diplomatic ties are a potential tool and mechanism available to the Security Council in events where the council would like to impose strict warnings and intervene with the events of a nation without the use of military force.

III. MANDATE & POWERS

ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

Sanctions are a form of coercion to pressurise a country into changing their policies or actions.²⁰ Economic sanctions, specifically, work by limiting their ability to finance themselves through prohibiting financial transactions, therefore forcing the country to comply and take favourable action towards international peace and security. Such sanctions include restrictions on trade and business, and imposing tariffs.²¹ The first rise of sanctions was seen during and after World War I as a strategic political tool.²² When the Security Council determines that a country has breached an agreement or threatened international security, the Council has the mandate to impose economic sanctions on the country. Therefore, imposing sanctions is significant and even seen as symbolic as well.²³

²⁰ Masters, J. (n.d.). What are economic sanctions? Council on Foreign Relations. Retrieved April 12, 2023, from <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-are-economic-sanctions>

²¹ Bajoria, J. (2010). Economic Sanctions. Council on Foreign Relations. Retrieved April 11, 2023, from <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/economic-sanctions>

²² Jentleson, B. W. (1992). Sanctions as a foreign policy tool: Weighing human rights and national security concerns. *Ethics & International Affairs*, 6(1), 81-96. Retrieved April 11, 2023, from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2601306>

²³ Einhorn, R. J., & Milani, M. (2010). Using economic sanctions to prevent deadly conflict. Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School. Retrieved April 11, 2023, from <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/using-economic-sanctions-prevent-deadly-conflict>

III. MANDATE & POWERS

The extent to which the successes of sanctions can be affected by several factors, including the ability of the targeted country to circumvent the sanctions, unintended negative impacts and the ease of maintaining support for the sanctions over time.²⁴ There have been historical examples where sanctions do not achieve the intended goal but instead, cause humanitarian suffering or economic declines. In the case of the first Gulf War in 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait to gain more control over the profitable oil supply of the middle east. The UNSC condemned this invasion and consequently passed Resolution 661, which imposed comprehensive sanctions to pressure Iraq to disarm their weapons of mass destruction programmes (WMD) and to make compensations to Kuwait.²⁵ However, it was counterproductive as it not only encouraged Iraq to be more self-sufficient over time, but more importantly it inflicted widespread humanitarian suffering, as seen by rampant famine, malnourishment and necessities supply and price issues. Furthermore, the World Bank reports that Iraq's GDP annual growth plummeted from 57.8% in 1990 to -64% in 1991. It is exactly this humanitarian suffering that allowed Iraq to pressure the international community to lift these forms of coercion.²⁶

²⁴ Morrison, K. (2021, March 10). Economic sanctions: What are they and do they work? BBC News. Retrieved April 11, 2023, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-55956674>

²⁵ "Sanctions against Iraq." (n.d.). Council on Foreign Relations. Retrieved April 12, 2023, from <https://www.cfr.org/background/sanctions-against-iraq>

²⁶ Borger, J. (2023, January 5). Why sanctions fell short of their objectives in the first Gulf War. LSE Business Review. Retrieved April 9, 2023, from <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2023/01/05/why-sanctions-fell-short-of-their-objectives-in-the-first-gulf-war/>

III. MANDATE & POWERS

Since then, sanctions have become more targeted, such as arms trafficking or investment in certain industries, instead of being more comprehensive.²⁷ This is to prevent the country from weaponizing the sanctions to their advantage, or cause severe harm to the civilians.

There have also been many examples of sanctions being effective at achieving their intended goals. For example, the international sanctions, including restrictions on oil exports and financial transactions on Iran, that managed to create a sense of urgency to Iran and eventually bring Iran to the negotiating table to reach the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2015.²⁸ The agreement aimed to limit Iran's nuclear program in exchange for lifting some of the sanctions. The Iranian government was eager to have the sanctions lifted, as the sanctions were severely impacting their economy and were causing public unrest.²⁹

As seen by the 2 examples above, the success or failure of sanctions can be caused by many different factors. Therefore it is important to consider them well, to determine whether it is suitable to impose sanctions to achieve the intended goals.

²⁷ Cortright, D., & Lopez, G. A. (2000). *The sanctions decade: Assessing UN strategies in the 1990s*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

²⁸ Fassihi, F., & Faucon, B. (2015, July 14). Iran Nuclear Deal Reached: Full Text of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved April 9, 2023, from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/iran-nuclear-deal-reached-full-text-of-joint-comprehensive-plan-of-action-1436919242>

²⁹ Neu, C. R., & Vestergaard, C. (2015). *The Iran nuclear agreement: A primer*. Center for Strategic and International Studies. Retrieved April 10, 2023, from <https://www.csis.org/analysis/iran-nuclear-agreement-primer>

III. MANDATE & POWERS

BLOCKADE

The Security Council can also use tangible methods such as blockades to maintain or promote security and peace. This would involve militia, possibly with the use of weapons or even artillery. This type of military operations are aimed to block off a certain country or region, causing them to not have access to certain information and resources. They will not have access to food, weapons or other supplies, and they will have limited communications. The UNSC can authorise blockades under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, which allows for the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security. A blockade puts pressure onto the region by causing the area to be isolated, which compromises the stability of the region. Despite negative effects that blockades can bring, like economic hardships and humanitarian crises, blockades are still used for UNSC to achieve their objectives. Firstly this is because blockades are effective at preventing the country from receiving and supplying weapons and military supplies to countries or regions that pose a security threat. Additionally, blockades can be used as a diplomatic tool to put pressure on a country or government to comply with the UNSC's demands. Blockades are regulated by international law—namely, by the 1856 Paris Declaration Respecting Maritime Law and by Articles 1–22 of the 1909 London Declaration Concerning the Laws of Naval War. This is a tangible method, differing from the previously mentioned mandates and powers.

III. MANDATE & POWERS

A well-known success story is that of the blockade of Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. Though the UNSC was not directly involved in authorising the blockade, the United States took unilateral action. However, the international community largely supported the US initiative, and it effectively halted the delivery of Soviet missiles to Cuba. This allowed the US and USSR to be able to start negotiating, which eventually led to the withdrawal of the Soviet missiles from Cuba in exchange for the removal of U.S. missiles from Turkey.

Blockades are used by the UNSC with caution, and also as a last resort when the country is not responding to other more peaceful means, as it can cause a disproportionate amount of humanitarian harm.

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