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Director's Welcome Letter

Dear delegates,

I am honored to welcome you to AUSMUN 2024, where you will play an essential role in shaping global discourse about world issues. This year's conference is set to be a platform for innovation, collaboration, and meaningful dialogue. Here we will explore global issues, analyze the complexities of the same, and propose solutions that satisfy the varying perspectives of countries in the international community.

It is important to remember that you think critically, engage in constructive debate, and seek to achieve common ground with your fellow delegates. At AUSMUN, we encourage you to approach this experience with an open mind and a commitment to finding a solution. This conference is not only a simulation but also an opportunity for you to develop skills that benefit your academic, professional, and personal lives. It is a chance to form connections with individuals who share a similar passion for global issues and diplomacy. I encourage you to make the most of this unique experience and to challenge your limits by thinking beyond the ordinary. Together, we will all contribute to the legacy of excellence that AUSMUN is known for.

I look forward to meeting you all and witnessing the remarkable contributions each of you will make to our conference.

Welcome to AUSMUN 2024, and let us embark on this enriching journey together. Warm regards,

Sarvagya Sharma Director of Research AUSMUN 2024

Moderator's Welcome letter

Distinguished delegates,

It is with great honor and pleasure that we extend the warmest welcome to you all to the American University of Sharjah Model United Nations! It is our pleasure to meet you all, and we are looking forward to seeing you debate and discuss the topics in our capacity as chairs of the HSC committee; we hope to make your experience in AUSMUN memorable.

Utilizing the experience we have gained over time will ensure that you benefit from a wide range of perspectives and a fresh approach to thinking during this three-day conference. Therefore, it is our responsibility to support you as much as we can as you are able to comprehend the objective of this committee and the debate that follows it.

The HSC provides a unique platform for delegates to explore and reenact historical security challenges, making it a stimulating and enlightening experience for those interested in the historical dimensions of global security and diplomacy.

Being a delegate undoubtedly comes with a rush of emotions, but the knowledge and experience gained are unparalleled. As such, always keep in mind that you have a bright future ahead of you, so put yourself out there and have faith in yourself. We look forward to an engaging and productive conference, and we wish you all the best as you prepare for your participation in HSC.

If you need help, please feel free to reach out to us anytime at unschsausmun24@gmail.com, and we'll be happy to assist you.

Chairs of UNSC HS:



Karam is a sophomore at the University of Birmingham in Dubai, where he is currently majoring in Computer Science and Software Engineering. Karam's deep-seated fascination with history has instilled in him an extensive knowledge of the subject, and he relishes any opportunity to immerse himself in reading and learning about it. He delved into his involvement in MUN at the beginning of 2018. Since then, he has participated in various roles, ranging from delegate to chairperson, and eventually served as the Secretary-General of the Abu Dhabi MUN, culminating in an unforgettable experience at every conference he has attended. Karam's participation in MUN has provided him with a comprehensive understanding of global issues and facilitated the development of an extensive repertoire of skills. As a chair of the HSC committee, it is Karam's pleasure to have the opportunity to get to know each of you and to make sure you have a wonderful conference experience. Please don't hesitate to contact Karam if you have any inquiries.



Thenura is a final-year International Business Student at Middlesex Dubai. He has been part of the MUN circuit since 2016 from being a delegate to a conference coordinator. He has attended MUNs in 5 different countries and has covered possibly every known committee possible (Yes, he is that active). Apart from MUN life, he runs a student podcast, MCed events such as Comic Con and sports & pop culture are the mantra of life. He is very excited to meet everyone to have fun and engaging debates and arguments thrown across the room

Brief about Committee

The United Nations Security Council High School (UNSC HS) serves as a specialized committee within Model United Nations (MUN), dedicated to addressing contemporary international security issues at the high school level. This council provides an engaging platform for delegates to participate in simulations of current global events, allowing them to delve into diplomatic strategies and decisions crafted in response to pressing security challenges. By immersing themselves in the present-day geopolitical landscape, delegates gain valuable insights into the intricacies of modern security issues and the ongoing efforts to navigate them. UNSC HS empowers participants to analyze and propose solutions to real-world security challenges, cultivating a deeper understanding of international relations and contributing to a more comprehensive view of the world's evolving security dynamics.

Topic 1: The Iran-Afghanistan conflict in light of the Helmand River

Summary & History

The Iran-Afghanistan conflict pertaining to the Helmand River has been a major regional dispute with profound implications for both countries as well as the broader global community. The Helmand River is a vital natural resource providing water, originating from Afghanistan, and that provides water to Iran. The question of control of the river has brought forward significant tensions and conflicts over its governance, especially considering the scarcity of water in the region itself, as well as the economic and environmental interests to secure a reliable water supply for consumption and agricultural use.

The roots of this conflict stretch up to the 20th century with major historical movements such as the Afghan-Iranian Helmand River-Water Treaty of 1973 which guaranteed that Afghanistan would provide 850 million cubic meters of water annually to Iran; however, prior to the treaty, the ownership dispute of the river became of significance once Afghanistan received their independence from the British in the early 20th Century.

The Helmand River is the longest river in Afghanistan, stretching 1150 kilometers across both Afghanistan and Iran. It serves as an important source of water considering the heavy levels of water scarcity in the Greater Middle East and Central Asia. Combined with the political instability in the region, control of major natural resources comes with a point of dispute between nations as proven by the Helmand River's importance. Political and ethnic tensions ranging from race, tribe, and religion play a part in the complicated political relationship between Afghanistan and Iran further fueling the conflict. Adding to the dynamic are the infrastructure projects by Afghanistan, such as dams.

Discourse on the Issue

The Iran-Afghanistan conflict over the Helmand River has far-reaching global implications across various dimensions, including geopolitical tensions, violations of the UN Charter, water scarcity, environmental degradation, regional security, and economic consequences. The conflict challenges the principles of the UN Charter, particularly peaceful dispute resolution and global cooperation, undermining the UN's role in maintaining global peace and security through diplomacy (UN, n.d.).

Socially, the conflict brings both positive and negative effects. Diplomatic discussions offer hope for improved relations between Iran and Afghanistan, potentially fostering stability and peace. However, it can also exacerbate local tensions, leading to instability and displacement, affecting local communities negatively.

Economically, the conflict has multifaceted consequences. Iran's commitment to citizens' rights and access to clean water presents a model for improved agricultural productivity and economic growth. Nonetheless, disruptions in the region may jeopardize food security and economic stability, impacting the broader region's economies.

Politically, the conflict has led to diplomatic discussions but also raised tensions. Threats and political maneuvering complicate the political landscape, making peaceful conflict resolution and international cooperation more challenging. The use of water resources as leverage in political disputes adds to regional instability and affects broader international relations.

The primary stakeholders, Iran and Afghanistan, are directly impacted, along with local communities dependent on the river. Neighboring Pakistan is also affected due to its reliance on agricultural products from the region, which may face supply chain disruptions, leading to economic consequences and regional food security challenges. The Helmand River conflict underscores the interconnectedness of global issues and the necessity of collaborative solutions for long-term resolution.

The conflict over the regulation and control of the Helmand River holds greater international concerns due to the dispute over a natural resource. The Afghanistan and Iran dispute acts as a contributing factor to even more destabilization in a very volatile region. Neighboring nations suffer from their lack of cross-border cooperation and willingness to come to a resolution. This further fuels the already major refugee crisis facing Afghanistan since the Taliban returned to power in 2021. Geopolitical interests with fellow nations such as the United States, Russian Federation (Russia), and China, for example, continue to play increasing roles in the region. With several countries holding various interests within the region, it only contributes to the instability when it comes to the question of the Helmand River. However, the most significant issue would be the status of water diplomacy. The importance of water diplomacy has been made prevalent by the dispute over the Helmand River during a time when water scarcity is rising across multiple countries internationally. The significance of this conflict emphasizes how international cooperation towards protecting water resources is required.

Past International Organization (IO) Actions & Latest Developments

The UN has addressed the issue through various resolutions and initiatives. The UN Security Council Resolution 1419 (2002) called for an immediate implementation of the Bonn Agreement aimed at the surveillance of natural water resources while stressing the importance of geopolitical cooperation with nations. However, its implementation has been complex and

difficult due to the tremulous environment surrounding Afghanistan's political landscape and control creating challenges of government and constitutional stability.

Currently, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has been actively monitoring and seeking information with regard to the clashes between Iran and Taliban-controlled Afghanistan on the Helmand River. As of May 27th, 2023, there have been recorded 3 deaths between Iran and Afghan security forces over clashes regarding the status of the river and as of March 16th, 2023, the UNAMA has been extended to continue providing services for another year (Reuters, 2023).

Major stakeholders over the Iran-Afghanistan conflict, aside from the two main parties, have continued to show interest and close concern over the conflict due to geopolitical interests. Pakistan, being neighbors with Afghanistan, has voiced the need for increased Water Diplomacy as a way to encourage stability in the region. Nations like the United States and China have been monitoring the situation to provide geopolitical assistance in order to gain a foothold in the Middle East and South-Central Asia.

Questions that the Committee and Resolutions Should Address

1. How can the UN ensure that Iran and Afghanistan meet the needs of both countries while addressing water scarcity in the region?
2. What steps can be taken to promote regional cooperation and confidence-building measures to resolve the conflict and build trust between Iran and Afghanistan in the context of the Helmand River?
3. How can the issue of potential environmental consequences from infrastructure development, such as dams on the Helmand River and its surrounding ecosystems, be effectively addressed in resolutions?

Suggestions for Further Research

- "Water Resource Management in Helmand River Basin": Explore improved water resource management and eco-friendly farming to mitigate regional disruptions caused by the conflict.
- "Humanitarian Response to Displaced Populations": Focus on humanitarian consequences of the Iran-Afghanistan Helmand River dispute, emphasizing aid for displaced individuals. Assess the roles of international bodies, governments, and local communities in addressing their needs.
- "Sustainable Cross-Border Environmental Cooperation": Examine initiatives and agreements for eco-friendly collaboration in the Helmand River Basin. Evaluate their

effectiveness and propose enhancements for ecological restoration and shared resource management.

Timeline of the Major Events

1960s-1970s: Iran and Afghanistan launch large-scale development projects along the Helmand River, including the construction of dams and irrigation systems, leading to increased water use.

February 1973: Iran and Afghanistan sign the Helmand River Treaty, a key agreement regulating water sharing in the Helmand River Basin.

1978-1979: The Iranian Revolution in 1979 and the subsequent Soviet invasion of Afghanistan disrupt the regional political landscape, impacting the Helmand River agreements.

July 1981: In the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Bonn Declaration establishes a framework for the country's political transition, affecting discussions on the Helmand River.

1990s-2000s: The Taliban's control of Afghanistan complicates water management issues, escalating tensions and disputes between Iran and the Taliban-controlled Afghan government.

October 2001: The Taliban regime falls, and a new Afghan government takes shape, reopening discussions on water management and the Helmand River.

October 2011: Iran and Afghanistan sign a Strategic Agreement, addressing various aspects of bilateral cooperation, including water resource management.

2012: Iran initiates a project to construct a water pipeline from the Helmand River to provide water to areas in its southeastern provinces, highlighting its commitment to addressing water scarcity issues.

December 2016: Iran adopts the Charter on Citizens' Rights, recognizing the human right to a decent life and access to clean water.

May - August 2021: The Taliban regains control of Afghanistan, introducing new complexities into the Helmand River conflict.



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Topic 2: Avoiding a new conflict in light of the growing military presence in the Arctic

Summary & History

The growth of military presence in the Arctic has gained increasing interest by countries internationally due to various environmental concerns making the areas more accessible as well as susceptible to commercial and military benefits noticed by nations. Major political and economic benefits include access to natural resources and geographic location making the Arctic a major focal point of discussion when it comes to its dispute, especially concerning the Arctic States in the region.

The Arctic region is home to three major natural resources – Fish, Natural Minerals, and Fossil Fuels. What was originally inaccessible due to harsh weather conditions and the polar ice caps, environmental degradation and global warming has made the area profitable to humans, allowing all these natural resources to be exposed and accessible to all interested stakeholders. The potential for conflict has risen in recent years especially due to military conflicts involving more powerful arctic states like the USA and Russia.

Several untapped resources remain in the Arctic, including Oil and Gas fields and natural mineral mines making it one of the most economically valuable regions on earth. This, in turn, creates the concern of conflict more possible between Arctic States due to global warming and climate change making the region accessible. Geopolitical tensions continue to rise, especially for Russia since being sanctioned by nations due to their military activities involving Ukraine. This leads to the main concern of security and stability in the region as several Arctic States and non-arctic states with interest hold major militaristic capabilities. The sovereignty and protection of the region have been disputed over the years but have now come to higher prominence.

The Arctic Region falls under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The treaty lays out the foundation for the rights and responsibilities to protect and responsibility utilize the ocean and its resources.

Discourse on the Issue

Preventing conflict in the Arctic is of paramount importance due to the region's vast untapped resources, including substantial oil and natural gas reserves. The potential competition for these resources could lead to global rivalries. The Arctic is experiencing rapid warming at a rate twice the global average, causing a 40% reduction in summer sea ice over four decades, making it more vulnerable to pollution and habitat destruction.

The increasing militarization of the Arctic is a major challenge in maintaining international peace and security, as it contradicts the core objective of the UN Charter. This militarization raises geopolitical tensions and risks armed hostilities, potentially undermining the territorial integrity and political independence of Arctic nations.

Socially, the Arctic's growing importance has led to improved cooperation among Arctic Council members, fostering a stable and peaceful environment. Economic activities, such as resource exploitation and research, have created job opportunities for Inuit communities, benefiting their socioeconomic well-being. However, the militarization has raised concerns among local populations.

Economically, the Arctic has seen growth in shipping and trade activities, particularly in Russia. This facilitates international trade and business opportunities, but conflict can disrupt resource extraction and economic growth.

Politically, the Arctic Council serves as a vital platform for Arctic cooperation, allowing countries to collaborate on various issues. Yet, militarization has increased geopolitical tensions among powerful nations, complicating diplomatic negotiations.

Various stakeholders are affected:

- Russia, with extensive Arctic territory, is actively expanding its military capabilities to safeguard its interests in the region.
- Canada, another Arctic nation, has ramped up military activities to assert sovereignty and protect its resources.
- The United States, despite not being a coastal state, is enhancing its military presence to protect Alaskan territory and assert its interests.
- Denmark, through its relationship with Greenland, is securing territorial claims and protecting Greenland's interests.

In conclusion, preventing conflict in the Arctic is crucial due to the region's resource potential and environmental vulnerability. Balancing economic interests, geopolitical tensions, and the well-being of local communities is essential for a peaceful and cooperative Arctic future.

Past International Organization (IO) Actions & Latest Developments

The UNCLOS provides the legal framework for law and order in governance towards the global oceans and seas in regard to territorial boundaries and access to natural resources. Although the Arctic is protected by UNCLOS, its implementation and effectiveness is

questionable as not all member nations, including some Arctic countries, have ratified the treaty. As a result, the disputes over its sovereignty continue.

The Arctic Council, consisting of eight Arctic states, has played a central role in governing the Arctic Region. With the primary focus being environmental and sustainable development disputes, the cooperation between the nations of the council provides an indirect positive growth in reduced tensions and conflict. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) has addressed militaristic concerns by several stakeholders interested in the region and continues to foster a forum for transparency between member states.

Major countries involved include all the Arctic states which include the United States, Russia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. The continuous dispute over territorial claims stems from the economic and geopolitical benefits waiting to be controlled by one of these nations. Non-Arctic Nations, like China, have shown even greater interest in gaining territory in the Arctic region.

The United Nations has listed the Arctic as an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which provides the region special rights regarding the exploration and utilization of natural and marine resources in the region.

Questions that the Committee and Resolutions Should Address

1. How can nations improve multilateral governance and collaboration in the Arctic to guarantee the utilization of the region's resources in a tranquil and environmentally sustainable way and to prevent disputes between Arctic states?
2. What steps may be taken in the framework of the resolution to address the environmental dangers connected to rising military action in the Arctic, such as oil spills, and to safeguard the distinctive and vulnerable Arctic ecosystems?
3. To prevent misunderstandings and inadvertent escalation, how might governments encourage openness and confidence-building measures among Arctic states in regard to military activities?
4. What legal frameworks can be devised to engage governments constructively in the Arctic while respecting the sovereignty of Arctic nations?
5. How can nations deal with the increased interest and presence of non-Arctic states in the region?

Suggestions for Further Research

- This subtopic focuses on the role of the Arctic Council in averting conflicts in the Arctic. It investigates the efficiency of the Council's protocols and pacts in preserving regional harmony and cooperation.
- This subtopic examines resource management and economic cooperation in the Arctic region. It evaluates the potential for gains from responsible resource extraction and global cooperation, with a focus on averting resource-related conflicts.
- This subtopic discusses the potential effects of militarization on their traditional ways of life and cultural preservation, with a particular focus on the rights and concerns of indigenous communities in the Arctic. It looks into the most effective approaches for countries to interact with indigenous peoples in order to uphold their rights and welfare.
- The environmental effects of a growing military presence in the Arctic are examined in this subtopic. In order to safeguard the sensitive Arctic ecosystem, it explores the requirement of thorough environmental impact analyses and sustainable practices in military activities.

Timeline of the Major Events

September 1996: The Arctic Council is established, providing a forum for Arctic nations to address regional issues, including military activities. It highlights the collaborative approach to governance.

August 2007: A Russian submersible plants the Russian flag beneath the North Pole, symbolizing territorial claims and causing international debate on Arctic sovereignty.

2011: The Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement is signed, emphasizing cooperative efforts for search and rescue operations in the Arctic, setting a precedent for regional collaboration.

2015-2020: In an effort to regain control of the Arctic, NATO increased its military activity in the region by two-thirds between 2015 and 2020, and Russia has assigned at least 81% of its nuclear arsenal to northern fleets.

2016: The Arctic sea ice shatters during the summer for the first time due to climate change, potentially paving the way for the complete loss of summer ice cover in the Arctic.



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January 2018: China releases its Arctic White Paper, outlining its interests in the Arctic and emphasizing peaceful and sustainable development, although it's not an Arctic nation.

2021: A surge in military activities is observed in the Arctic region, including exercises and presence by various nations. This escalatory development raises concerns about the potential for conflicts and necessitates a focus on conflict prevention.

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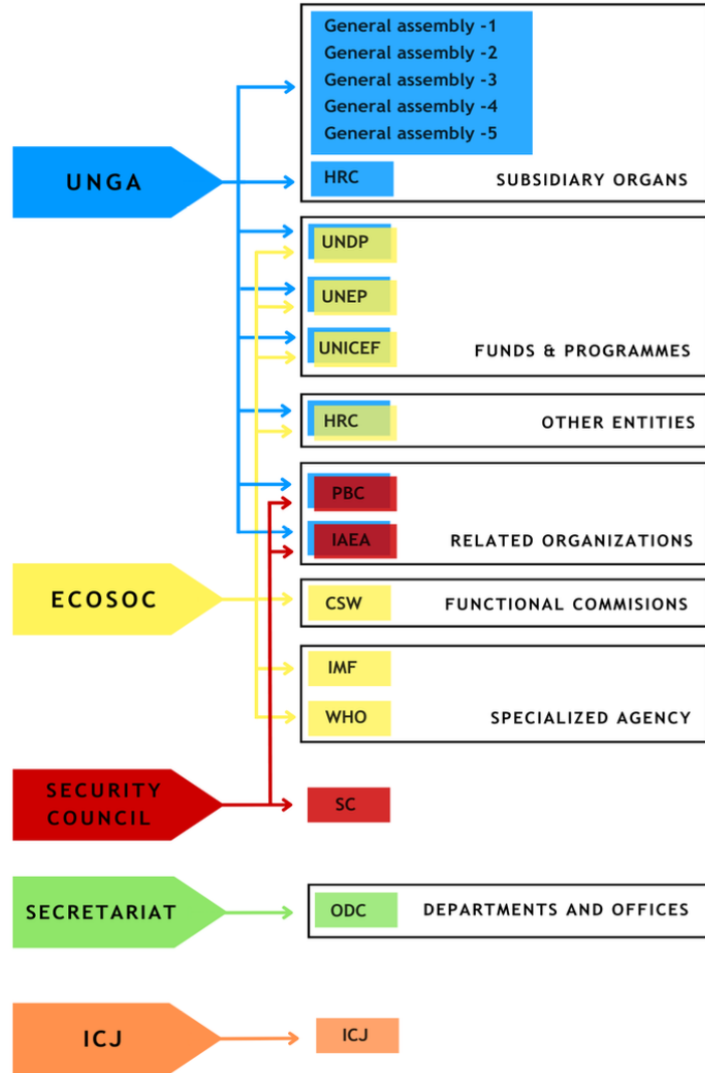
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