

THAIMUN IX

# UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL



Chair	Email	School
Jeremy Kim	yhkjeremy@gmail.com	International Community School
Shrish Mahesh	shma23@patana.ac.th	Bangkok Patana School

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## Brief Overview of the Committee



Welcome, delegates to the United Nations Security Council!

The security council, one of 6 principal organs of the United Nations, is a committee having its goals in maintaining international peace and security out of many others, and can take actions such as sanctions and military operations to do so. Oftentimes than not, such actions are imposed to resolve conflicts, as they are one of few methods of the international community to actively condemn the actions of a nation they cannot attack through force. While passive solutions are possible and should be sought upon, please do note that the aforementioned actions are possible within this committee.

The Council has 15 members total, consisting of 10 temporary members that are regularly rotated out and 5 permanent members, namely the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China. The permanent members have the right to veto, which would result in the automatic failure of any substantive resolution. Please do note that the right to veto is scarcely used during committee sessions, but do feel free to use them freely and diplomatically as delegates seem fit.

Within this committee, please be reminded of chapter 1 of the U.N Charter, and its focus on maintaining peace, security, and developing friendly relations between nations.

## Topic 1: The Question of Ukraine's Border Security

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### **INTRODUCTION OF THE TOPIC:**

Russia-Ukraine relations has been treading thin ice ever since the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the formation of Ukraine as an independent state. Ukraine's former status as a satellite state under the U.S.S.R, and the cultural influences that had in certain parts of the country, the polarization between the two groups intensified, reaching its peak during the Annexation of Crimea.

Throughout the years, there have been various new developments regarding the relation between the two nations. Notable events include the war in Donbass, the Signing of the two Minsk agreements, and UN Resolutions being passed on the issue. The situation seemed to be de-escalating by 2020, as involved parties committed to ceasefires.

More recently, Russia has been seen consistently increasing the number of troops deployed on the Ukrainian border, which is only further escalating the tension within eastern Europe.

The source of the tensions can be identified in a conflict of interest between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, in a larger sense NATO. As NATO maintains its policy of allowing any European nation committed to its cause, it has led to the organization's inevitable expansion from its post-WWII borders. The Russian Federation is completely against this however, and condemns NATO for its expansion with its complete disregard to regional tensions, especially with the Russian Federation.

### **HISTORY OF THE TOPIC**

Timeline of the Ukrainian Crisis

#### **2013**

21 November: Euromaidan protests begin in Ukraine

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### 2014

25 February: Pro-Russian protesters demand referendum on Crimea independence, Russian armored carriers deployed in Sevastopol

27 February: 60 pro-Russian gunmen seized parliament building, emergency session was held within the Crimean parliament and decided to terminate the current Crimean government, replace the prime minister, and to hold a referendum regarding greater autonomy

28 February: Russian Military intervention in Crimea begins, Crimea's Airport and Balaklava harbor is blocked and/or captured

1 March: Russian parliament grants Putin approval to invade Ukraine, Government at Kiev puts troops on alert for possible war, and the U.S warns Russia of political isolation

18 March: The annexation of Crimea is finalized by President Putin, Russian sanctions are put in place by U.S and her European allies

12 April: Pro-Russian separatists in the Donbas region declares independence, The War in Donbas begins

5 September: A ceasefire is negotiated between Russia and Ukraine

### 2015

12 February: The second Minsk agreement is signed

17 February: Security council unanimously adopts resolution 2202 which details the measures needed for the implementation of the Minsk agreements

### 2021

21 February: Russia deploys 3,000 paratroopers to the border for "military exercises"

30 March: Russian troop buildup in the Ukrainian border is seen through satellite images

13 November: Increased buildup of Russian troops in the Ukrainian border

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The current state of Ukraine's border security has its roots in a deeper, much older context - Euromaidan. Following the Ukrainian former president's decision to opt out of an agreement to integrate the country with the EU, enraged citizens took to the streets in peaceful protest to show their dissent in the presidential decision. As the protests went on, Russia backed the former president, Yanukovich, while U.S, and the majority of Europe supported the protestors. Eventually, the government gave way, exiled Yanukovich, and Ukraine created a new coalition government.

Following the regime change, another set of protests and revolts arose, this time from the opposite end. Pro-Russian separatists. Not soon after the start of the protests, Russian troops were mobilized under the orders of Vladimir Putin, which then took control of the parliament of Crimea. Not long after the de-facto rule of Crimea began, the parliament decided to align itself with Russia, requesting the Russian parliament to "start the procedure", which Russia responded to by annexing Crimea.

The war of Donbas that followed the annexation of Crimea is an ongoing one, as the states of Ukraine, the Donetsk People's Republic, and the Russian Federation are at a conflict of interest, which led to a humanitarian crisis in the region.

### **KEY TERMS:**

#### **Euromaidan Protests:**

Protests that opposed the Ukrainian government's decision to strengthen relations with Russia instead of EU and NATO, Also revolved around anti-corruption.

#### **War in Donbass:**

Following the spread of Russian separatism to eastern Ukraine (namely the Donbass region as the name suggests), the conflict between the government and the separatists escalated to an armed one, leading to a war that continues to this day (2022).

### **OCSE**

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A multinational organization that works for security and cooperation in Europe. It has been involved in various international affairs, including the current situation in Ukraine.

### **NATO**

Also known as the North Atlantic Treaty organization, the organization was formed directly after the end of WWII to deter Soviet expansion efforts. Today, the organization aims to “guarantee freedom and security of its members through political and military means”.

### **Minsk Agreement**

A pair of agreements (Minsk I and Minsk II) made by Russia, Ukraine, and the OCSE, which aims to foster peace and de-escalation in the region. Clauses include: an immediate bilateral ceasefire, Decentralization of power through local self-governance in Donetsk and Luhansk, Monitoring of the Ukrainian-Russian border, etc.

## **Bloc Positions**

### **Russian Federation**

In recent light, the Russian Federation is slowly but surely increasing the number of troops stationed at the Russia-Ukraine border, mentioning “appropriate retaliatory military-technical measures” in response to western aggression. Russia wishes to prevent Ukraine leaning towards the European Union and NATO, fearing it will tip the power balance in the middle east. President Putin also warned NATO to stop its eastward expansion, and to end their military activity in Eastern Europe. Russia also demands the redesign of Europe’s security architecture to reestablish Russia as a global power.

### **Ukraine**

While there were two Minsk agreements, one in 2014 and one in 2015, both agreed upon by all involved parties, Ukraine’s current stance doesn’t seem to align with the previous negotiations. Ukraine believes that in both agreements, they gave away “too much to Russia and the Separatists” . Ukraine wishes to prevent the Donbas region from falling into Russian hands and/or independence, and to reclaim Crimea. On a more international scale however, Ukraine no longer wants to remain under the Russian sphere of influence, opting towards NATO membership instead.

### United States

The United States has established a strong stance with Ukraine. They note that “The borders and territorial integrity of a state cannot be changed by force” and that there are certain rules that members of the international community must keep. The United States believes that Russia has violated these principles, and has made multiple threats of sanctions if these actions are to continue. The U.S has also shown support through international organizations as well as economic support to Ukraine.

### United Kingdom

The United Kingdom and its allies are willing to take a more aggressive response to Russian actions towards Ukraine. In a recent BBC article, the prime minister has warned that continued Russian aggression will be met by “severe economic sanctions”. The United Kingdom is also willing to contribute further NATO deployments in Ukraine to protect its allies in Europe.

### NATO

NATO, one of the key stakeholders in the Ukrainian crisis, is an advocate of its “open door policy” that allows any European nation the right to ask for a membership. All members of NATO agree that Ukraine should be given the membership, and have promised Ukraine a membership in 2008. Once membership is granted, NATO is willing to engage with any threats of one of its member states, under the notion of “Collective defense”.

### Questions A Resolution Must Answer:

The current situation in Ukraine is not an issue that can be solved by a snap of a finger, and there are various points that must be considered by the Security Council. Focal points in restoring international peace **Include but are not limited to:**

- 1. The conclusion of the War in Donbas:** The War in Donbas, an ongoing conflict within Ukrainian borders has lasted for the last 8 years, starting from April of 2014. In order to resolve the question of the Ukrainian border and to establish stability within the region, The War in Donbas must be an issue that needs to be addressed, as well as the conditions of said conclusion of the conflict.



- 2. The alienation of Donbas:** As the war in Donbas continues, the separation between the pro-Russian, de-facto state, the Donetsk People's Republic, and the Ukrainian mainland grows larger and larger. Recently, Kiev cut off trade between Ukraine and the breakaway states, displaying the increasing tension between the two states. How the alienation of Donbas will be resolved, as well as how the International community should approach the human crisis, is another question.
- 3. Humanitarian Crisis in Ukraine:** A variety of humanitarian issues have arisen in Ukraine due to the continuation of the war. The number of internally displaced persons reached the millions, and many are still displaced even to this day. Food security is also an issue, as costs of living are increasing due to decreased supply. Civilian casualties also become a major concern, as a full-blown war may cause tens of thousands of casualties.
- 4. De-escalation in the region:** Even disregarding the ongoing war in Ukraine, the recent influx of troops near the Ukraine-Russia border is escalating tensions within the Middle East. The Security Council must establish a way to de-escalate tensions for long term international security.
- 5. Repercussions:** Various acts of aggression were made by the Russian Federation towards Ukraine. The military intervention leading up to the annexation of Crimea, The war in Donbas, and now strategic troop placement near the Ukrainian border. While the United States and her European allies are already sanctioning the Russian Federation, the committee as a whole must decide if further sanctions and/or means to discourage Russian aggression towards Ukraine are necessary.

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## Topic 2: The Question of a Nuclear Free World

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### **INTRODUCTION OF THE TOPIC:**

The development of nuclear weapons started with the Manhattan project in August 1942; the first nuclear weapon was used in wartime on August 6th 1945 when the US dropped a Uranium bomb on the city of Hiroshima. After World War II, the Cold War played a huge part in the increase in nuclear weapon stockpiles of the United States and the Soviet Union. Currently, nine countries possess nuclear weapons; they are the US, UK, Russia, China, North Korea, India, Pakistan, and France (Israel is also believed to possess nuclear weapons). As of January 2021, it was estimated that there were 13,080 nuclear warheads in the world with around 90% of them belonging to the US and Russia, although it is worth noting that a few thousand nuclear weapons have been retired.

The consequences of using nuclear weapons are drastic. When used, nuclear weapons can kill tens of thousands of people in an instant. The detonation of nuclear weapons results in intense heat and harmful radiation which is spread across the area of detonation and this leads to huge amounts of destruction, displacement and can cause long term damage to not only human health but also to the economy, infrastructure and environment. Communities in nuclear testing areas have been affected by the radiation caused by nuclear weapon testing.

In order to hold back the spread of nuclear weapons, the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons was signed in 1970 consisting of nuclear weapon states and non-Nuclear Weapons states; the treaty required nations to progress towards nuclear disarmament and tried to ensure that nations did not trade or obtain additional nuclear weapons.. Nuclear proliferation is definitely a pressing issue with a number of countries owning nuclear weapons increasing or modernizing their nuclear weapon inventory. In addition, the threat of nuclear proliferation seems even more imminent considering that countries such as Turkey have expressed interest in obtaining nuclear weapons. A nuclear war, although unlikely, would cause immense destruction on a social, environmental and economic level globally.

## **DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS:**

### **Nuclear Weapons:**

A nuclear weapon is defined as a bomb or projectile that uses nuclear energy to generate an explosion. Nuclear fission is normally used to generate explosions and the elements most commonly found in the making of nuclear weapons are uranium and plutonium

### **Nuclear Proliferation:**

Nuclear proliferation is defined as the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapon technology.

### **NPT:**

Treaty on the non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It was created for the purpose of nuclear disarmament and to ensure that nations do not transfer nuclear weapons. It has been signed by 191 countries.

### **TPNW:**

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Prohibits nations from taking part in nuclear activities which includes deploying nuclear weapons providing other states with nuclear weapons.

### **NAC:**

New Agenda Coalition. An alliance between 7 nations currently, that was founded in 1998 in order to further the cause of nuclear disarmament.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:**

In 1938, nuclear fission was discovered by nuclear physicists Otto Hahn, Lise Meitner, Fritz Strassman. This made the creation of the first nuclear weapon, the atom bomb, possible. The US, out of fear that Germany was developing its own nuclear weapons, started the Manhattan project in

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order to work on nuclear research. A lot of the work in the Manhattan Project was performed due to the guidance of Robert Oppenheimer. During July 1945, the first atom bomb was detonated in a remote village in an isolated area in New Mexico.

1945 also marked the first two instances, and to this day the only instances of the use of nuclear weapons in wartime. The US dropped a uranium atom bomb on the city of Hiroshima in August 1945 and a plutonium atom bomb 3 days later on Nagasaki. The bombing of Hiroshima killed around 80,000 people in an instant and thousands more died from the nuclear radiation that remained after the bomb exploded; the Nagasaki bombing also caused the death of 40,000 people immediately, showing the true extent of these bombs' destructive capacities. These bombings also marked the end of World War II.

After World War II, the US was the only country which possessed nuclear weapons, however, the USSR managed to discover how to build a fission bomb through a network of spies and they discovered sources of uranium. This allowed the Soviets to test their first nuclear bomb in 1949. In response, the US started developing thermonuclear weapons. Thus the Cold War started. Over the next few years, many superpowers increased their nuclear weapon supply. The Cuban Missile Crisis marked another moment in history when nuclear weapons could have been used in wartime. The Soviet Union installed missiles in Cuba, and these were near to the US shores prompting a 13 day standoff.

The NPT was signed in 1968 by the US and the Soviet Union. There were non-signatories to the NPT as well such as Pakistan, Israel, South Sudan and India, which tested its first nuclear weapon in 1974. North Korea withdrew from the NPT in 2003 and has tested nuclear weapons since 2006.

In addition to the NPT, there were other coordinated efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation such as the NAC which was formed in 1998 and the TPNW which was signed by 86 countries.

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### TIMELINE

Date	Event
December 1938	German nuclear physicists Otto Hahn, Lise Meitner and Fritz Strassman discover nuclear fission.
December 28, 1942	The Manhattan Project was approved by Franklin D. Roosevelt. Nuclear research facilities were established in certain remote locations in the US to aid the US's nuclear research and development.
January 1, 1943	Los Alamos Laboratory in northern New Mexico was established and this would be the place where the first nuclear bombs were built.
July 16, 1945	The first atomic bomb was detonated in an isolated location in New Mexico.
August 6, 1945	A uranium bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima resulting in the death of around 80000 people at that instant as well as more injuries, death and destruction after the bombing.
August 9, 1945	A plutonium bomb was dropped over the city of Nagasaki, resulting in the immediate death of approximately 40000 people as well as devastating after effects.
August 29, 1949	The USSR tests its first nuclear bomb
November 1, 1952	The US tests a hydrogen bomb and it is found to be 500 times more powerful than the one dropped on Nagasaki.
October 1962	The Soviet Union installs nuclear weapons on Cuba, close to US shores. This would prompt a 13 day standoff, which is now known as the Cuban missile crisis
July 1, 1968	The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is signed.
May 1974	India becomes the first country outside the NPT to test nuclear weapons.
June 12, 1982	People rally in New York City to protest the use of nuclear weapons and to call for nuclear disarmament
September 30, 1986	It is discovered that Israel may have a supply of nuclear weapons
May 1998	India conducts nuclear tests, the first instance since 1974 and Pakistan, another non-signatory of the NPT, also conducts nuclear tests
June 1998	The New Agenda Coalition is formed and calls for more



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	efforts towards nuclear disarmament and the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.
January 10, 2003	North Korea announces its withdrawal from the NPT
October 9, 2006	North Korea announces that it successfully carried out a nuclear test
September 20, 2017	The TPNW is signed with 86 signatories and outlines a detailed set of prohibitions from participating in nuclear weapon related activities
Januray 1, 2018	Kim Jong Un declares that North Korea is capable of countering any nuclear threat from the US
September 2019	Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan suggest that Turkey wishes to possess nuclear weapons
November 2021	A Pentagon report suggested that China was looking to build up its nuclear weapon stockpile and was aiming to have 1000 nuclear warheads by 2030
December 2021	Russia threatens to deploy nuclear weapons in response to NATO's arming of Ukraine
January 2022	North Korea tests 7 nuclear weapons in a month

## CURRENT ISSUE

Nuclear weapons are extremely destructive. The detonation of nuclear weapons would result in tens of thousands of deaths in an instant. In addition, they also cause huge amounts of destruction to the surrounding areas. The mushroom cloud formed during detonation distributes radioactive particles, which may also be carried to other areas by the wind, around the surrounding areas causing contamination of the air, soil, food and water supply. Lastly, nuclear weapon use can also lead to genetic mutation and birth defects in future generations for those who are exposed to the nuclear radiation. Even nuclear testing can have disastrous consequences as evidenced by the US's testing of nuclear bombs over the Marshall Islands; exposed Marshallese suffered from radiation poisoning, leukamiea, birth defects, and cancers as well as a result of the US's testing of nuclear weapons over the Marshall Islands from 1946 to 1958. Given these severe effects of nuclear weapons and even their testing in remote regions, it is apparent that the development of nuclear weapons poses a serious threat to the world. Countries such as China and North Korea continue to increase and develop their nuclear weapon stockpiles and

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Russia also threatened to deploy nuclear weapons. This acceleration of nuclear development and the expression of desire of certain countries to obtain nuclear weapons possibly increases the possibility of nuclear weapons being used in conflict again. Furthermore, the testing of nuclear weapons has already been shown to have harmful consequences on the areas of testing. Ultimately, this development of nuclear weapons creates a continued environmental and social threat as well as possible economic devastation.

### **STANCE OF INVOLVED NATIONS**

#### **Russian Federation**

Russia is estimated to have around 6000 nuclear warheads and around 1600 of them are estimated to be deployed strategic nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union consisted of many different countries including Russia and it became the second country after the US to successfully test nuclear weapons when it exploded thermonuclear devices in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan. Accounts from residents who were schoolchildren at the time revealed that their school's windows were destroyed and that their bodies were convulsed when the bomb was tested. There were also many genetic defects and diseases in the region as a result of the testing. According to the Federation of American Scientists, Russia has been reducing its nuclear weapon stockpiles along with the US and UK. However, Russia, along with the UK, US and France, chose to boycott the TPNW and has hinted at threats of using nuclear weapons against NATO countries if they continued to aid Ukraine and take back Crimea. Russia's military doctrine states that Russia reserves the right to use nuclear weapons as a mechanism of self defence against Russia and/or its allies.

#### **United States of America**

The US is estimated to have over 5000 nuclear warheads and 1600 deployed strategic nuclear weapons. It was the first country to develop nuclear weapons and to this day, the only country to use them in war. In addition to the Marshall Islands, the US has tested nuclear weapons in many other locations including the Amchitka Test site in Alaska. The biggest explosion at the test site was of a bomb that was 250 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. The explosion created cavities in the ground which trapped radioactive material underneath Amchitka. When the groundwater passed by these cavities, they picked up

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the radioactivity and carried it to the oceans. The US has been reported by the Federation of American Scientists to be decreasing its nuclear weapon supply but it has also been involved in the modernization of its existing nuclear weapons stockpile. The US maintains that nuclear weapons may be used in conflict with another nuclear armed state, however, President Joe Biden has said that the only purpose of the nuclear weapons stockpile of the US should be to prevent and retaliate against a nuclear attack.

### **North Korea**

According to certain estimates from analysts, North Korea may have over 60 nuclear weapons. North Korea withdrew from the NPT in 2003 and openly announced that they tested nuclear weapons in 2006. North Korea tested a nuclear weapon underground in 2017 as well which created an explosion 16 times the size of the bomb dropped over Hiroshima. It was also found that from 2006 to 2016, North Korea had been gradually increasing the size of the nuclear bombs that it had been testing. North Korea has also, in the last 5 years, on multiple occasions threatened or insinuated that it will be deploying its nuclear weapons against the US. In January 2022 alone, North Korea carried out 7 nuclear weapon tests and is believed to be continuing its production of nuclear weapons.

## **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

As a result of the nuclear development of some countries, it is essential to come up with a solution that will slow down this development and perhaps decrease the risk of any nuclear conflict happening in the future. Countries could impose harsher economic sanctions on countries that threaten others with the use of nuclear weapons or those who are developing their nuclear weapon stockpiles rapidly. Alternatively, countries could be invited to a convention in order to convince the countries who have not signed the NPT to do so. Another possible solution could be to establish a UN fund that would be used to strengthen different countries' militaries. This could be specifically directed at the countries who have expressed a desire to own nuclear weapons and thus these countries would have stronger defenses and may not have as much of an incentive to develop nuclear weapons. Another possible solution is for a UN fund to be established to provide select countries with nuclear energy so that they can slowly transfer technology used for developing nuclear weapons to technology that can be used for nuclear energy. It could also be a

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requirement that nations begin transitioning their nuclear development technology into an alternative source such as generating nuclear energy for the country if they have the technology to do so.

### **CONCLUSION**

The idea of a nuclear free world seems difficult to achieve, however it is almost necessary to ensure that nuclear disarmament occurs. The possibility that nuclear weapons may be used in war is frightening and the damages to the affected country and the world in general would be huge. Unfortunately, there are countries that do not wish to cooperate with this aim and continue to develop their nuclear weapon stockpiles in one way or another. Delegates must try to find a way to agree upon a solution to this issue on an international level and establish a strong element of cooperation between nations in order to achieve nuclear disarmament or at least create resolutions that will reduce the risk of our world being affected by nuclear weapons in the future.

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