

BACKGROUND GUIDE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC)



WMIDMUN-XXII

DIRECTORS LETTER



Dear Delegates,

My name is Jake Ponte, and I am ecstatic to be your director for Security Council this March! I am a sophomore from New Jersey majoring in Government with a minor in Accounting. Beyond the International Relations Club, I am Secretary of the Latin American Student Union, a member of William & Mary's chapter of Kappa Delta Rho, and a buddy in Best Buddies at William & Mary! In my free time, I enjoy playing soccer, listening to Latin music, and catching up on old movies.

I have involved myself in William & Mary MUN conferences since last year's edition of WMHSMUN where I chaired ECHOLAC. From there, I directed the UEFA committee at WMIDMUN, crisis-staffed the Meiji Restoration at &MUN, and directed the WMHSMUN OPEC committee. As you can see, I have played several roles within IRC, so I am excited for another opportunity to work alongside my peers to give you all the best conference in-committee experience possible.

Before stepping foot in my WMHSMUN committee room last year, I had zero experience at a MUN conference hosted on a college campus. While I was involved with MUN all four years of high school, I had the opportunity to attend only one regional conference every year held at a hotel venue. I was not exposed to the collegiate experience until my first time staffing at William & Mary. That being said, I am grateful for the conference atmosphere I participated in because it focused on public speaking, writing, and teamwork. In retrospect, I can wholeheartedly say that despite my lack of experience, my academic foundation prepared me perfectly for William & Mary. I even traveled to my first collegiate conference in Montreal!

From my first introduction to MUN to now, I learned the value of each conference, presenting a new challenge to research an unfamiliar position and collaborate with delegates with different perspectives from my own. I learned to speak with persuasion and tried to understand the position of others in moderated caucuses and unmoderated caucuses. So, I challenge every one of you to develop your distinct style that can appeal to others while staying true to your beliefs. Raise your placard, walk over to delegates on the other side of the room, and share your ideas for a resolution. As you research your position, consider how different approaches to an issue may impact your viewpoint. Prepare to win over delegates with confident body language and coherent speeches, and you will be amazed by your efforts at the end of the conference.

I am eager to see what you come up with in your position papers and how you incorporate your ideas into the committee room. If you have any questions, please reach out to me through email. I look forward to seeing you come this March!

Jake Ponte

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COMMITTEE PROCEDURES & HISTORY



The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) formed in 1946, focuses on “maintaining international peace and security.” The UNSC has five permanent member nations, China, the United Kingdom, Russia, the United States, and France, known as the P5. The Security Council can impose sanctions and authorize the use of force with resolutions. However, the UNSC aims to first settle disputes by peaceful means. Since its inception, the UNSC has taken a global and international lead in “determining the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression.”

Although the real-life UNSC has its special procedures, rules, and protocols, for this committee, the Security Council will function as a General Assembly (GA). Each delegation will hold the same weight in committee, each vote will count equally, and no delegations will have veto power.



BACKGROUND 1.0



Topic 1: Situation in the DRC

History:

From the largest city in Africa to the gushing Congo River, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is one of the largest countries in Africa. However, the region remains scarred by the effect of colonialism, with corruption, instability, and violence running rampant. Before European colonization, a thriving, agricultural civilization emerged in the Congo region during the 10th century, with art and political structures comparable to other iron age civilizations globally. Around 1453, European contact and exploration of the Congo River began. In the late 19th century, the scramble for Africa kicked off, with a race to the treasure trove of resources scattered throughout the continent. In 1885, the Belgian King: Leopold II, declared the Congo Free state, putting the DRC under European rule for the first time. Belgian occupation resulted in over 10 million Congolese people dying from famine, war, illness, and overwork.

Postcolonialism:

In 1960 the Belgian government relinquished control of the DRC, leading to an independent state for the first time. This began the start of political violence in the DRC with Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba dealing with an escalating crisis in the secession of the Katanga region. In July of 1960, UN peacekeepers were deployed for the first time, to respond to the escalating violence in the DRC. These peacekeepers were ordered not to intervene in political affairs, making them virtually useless. In 1961, Lumumba was killed, likely with Belgian and American covert support.

While the Katanga rebellion was mostly solved with U.N. peacekeeping efforts, in 1965 Joseph Mobutu seized power, putting the DRC under single-person rule for decades. Mobutu renamed the DRC “Zaire” and began to nationalize foreign investment, dissuading future FDI. In the late 1980s, as a result of economic and political tensions, the DRC began to adopt increasingly free market policies as well as open the political system to multiple parties for the first time. However, in 1997, Tutsi rebels overthrew the Mobutu government, with heavy support from Rwanda. Laurent-Desire Kabila becomes president and continues to fight against the Rwandan and Ugandan-backed rebels with support from neighboring nations. In 1999 a ceasefire was signed between combatants, limiting some of the widespread violence. In 2000 a 5000-strong peacekeeper force was deployed to ensure a ceasefire was followed, however, violence remained in the eastern portion of the nation. In 2001, under Security Council resolution 1291 MONUSCO (United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo) was created. MONUSCO existed under a mandate to monitor the cease-fire, resolve violence in the DRC, and resolve future hotspots of conflict. In 2002, the Luanda agreements were signed, creating a ceasefire between Uganda and the DRC. Regional ethnic conflicts countered consistently throughout this time, notably in the Kivu region.

BACKGROUND 1.0



Rise of M23:

One of the critical issues facing the DRC is the rise of militant groups, particularly in the eastern Kivu region; this is shown most clearly with the March 23rd movement or M23 for short. M23 is openly belligerent to UNSC peacekeepers and the Congolese government, complicating the existing humanitarian crisis in eastern DRC.

Present day:

Many of these rebel groups acquire weapons and international backing through the sale of natural resources, tapping into the \$24 Trillion of rare earth minerals and other resources. This has resulted in boycotts of "Blood resources" from the DRC, impacting the economy of the DRC. Disease outbreaks have plagued the weak central government with Ebola epidemics killing thousands and straining the healthcare system, while COVID-19 ripped through the nation, damaging its economy and killing untold numbers of Congolese citizens. Throughout the entirety of the Congo today, over 100 armed groups pose a threat to regional stability, each fueled by ethnic, economic, and political tensions. 13,500 peacekeepers are present under the MONUSCO mandate.





RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What can be done to stabilize the DRC?

What role does MONUSCO have in the
future of the DRC?

What can be done to prevent foreign
influence in the DRC?

BACKGROUND 2.0



Topic 2: Economic Sanctions

UNSC Sanctions:

The UNSC reserves the right to impose economic sanctions, allowing countries to cut economic ties with targeted nations. For example, the UNSC can issue sanctions on countries in violation of Security Council directives, with some examples being the 1991 invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. The UNSC issued sanctions on Iraq, eventually promoting the U.S.-led Operation Desert Storm.

What are Sanctions:

Sanctions are the ability of a sovereign nation or international body to cut off foreign individuals or nations from Economic or political systems. For example, the US can use sanctions to prevent American businesses from operating in targeted countries. Sanctions can also be used to cut off countries from political and cultural events, such as the Olympics or sporting events. Two major examples of this are South Africa's cut-off from sporting events during the Apartheid era and the more recent sanctions on Russia after the 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Sanctions can also be used to target individuals, commonly through freezing and seizing financial accounts and actions.

Furthermore, the role of UNSC sanctions has been highly controversial. Often promoted by P5-led blocs, economic sanctions have been called 'economically coercive' and have raised questions about the role of global development and economic cooperation. Additionally, in its current form, UNSC sanctions have no method of enforcement within a country, often leading the sanctions to be ignored.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What role does the UNSC play in Economic sanction enforcement?

What powers do individual countries have to enforce sanctions>

How do national interests coincide with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

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