

# Hilton 2024 Chair Letter

## Crisis 1 - (Russian Perspective)

### *Committee Overview*

#### *Russo-Japanese War*

#### COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION:

This committee will be run Crisis-style, meaning that the chosen topic will develop as the conference proceeds. These “crisis updates” will be dependent on the progress made by Crisis #2, consisting of the opposing Japanese perspective. Please note that the Crisis procedure is different from that of a standard Model-UN committee; do not hesitate to email the chairs if you need assistance in understanding the altered formatting.

For best preparation, delegates should arrive with a working knowledge of the Russo-Japanese War, its context, and any beliefs held by their assigned role. A helpful guide for success in Crisis committees can be found [here](#).

To be eligible for an individual award, delegates must email a complete position paper to the chairs by the start of the conference, though in-person submissions are preferred. Before delegates start their position papers, they must email the chairs with their top three choices for committee roles. Roles will be assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis, so try to email the chairs with your preferences as soon as possible. While this is a pressing matter, remember that MUN is not a competition. It is a platform for students to work together and solve the world’s most pressing issues, so get to researching and try to have fun!

#### ABOUT US:

##### Brook Hoffer

My name is Brook Hoffer and I am a senior at Webster Thomas High School. This is my 4th year in MUN and my third time chairing and I am the president of my school’s MUN. Outside of Model UN, I am heavily involved in theater and choir, and I love to code and play video games for fun! I am so excited to meet all of you and feel free to reach out with any questions you may have.

Email: [Brookh545@gmail.com](mailto:Brookh545@gmail.com)

##### Ana Bansal

Hello! I’m Ana Bansal, I am a junior at Brighton High School. This is my 3rd year doing Model UN, and my first time chairing. Outside of school, I work at a public library, involve myself in climate activism, volunteer with my local Key Club, and enjoy performing in plays. I have a rather eclectic taste in music, and enjoy reading detective stories and science fiction. Feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns, and I look forward to meeting all of you!

Email: [Anabansal9@gmail.com](mailto:Anabansal9@gmail.com)

## Background

The Russo-Japanese war began at the outset of the 20th century. Both the Russian and Japanese empires had imperialist ambitions in Manchuria and Korea. As both governments feel that their own interests are threatened by those of their rivals', tensions grew between Russia and Japan. Though only lasting a year, with fighting ending in the spring of 1905. The war changed the geopolitical landscape of Asia, marking the rise and falls of two of the greatest empires of the 19th and 20th centuries. It is sometimes even dubbed by some historians as "World War Zero".

Since 1897, Russia had been leasing Port Arthur, a naval base on the Liaodong Peninsula in Manchuria, from the Qing Dynasty. For Russia, warm water ports, ports from where ships can be launched year-round without the dangers of ice, were essential. Meanwhile, Japan had successfully modernized since the Meiji Restoration by adopting Western technologies, and had turned itself into a formidable imperialist power. Japanese concerns about Russian influence in China began to grow, stemming from Russian support during the first Sino-Japanese war in 1897.



Initially, the Japanese proposed that the Russians could have control of Manchuria if Korea remained under the influence of Japan. The Russians, refusing this compromise, proposed that the area of Korea North of the 39th line of latitude serve as a neutral zone. As diplomatic negotiations broke down, tensions between the two imperialist powers continued to grow until in 1904, war broke out in the Pacific Ocean. However, leaders of the Russian Empire did not receive notice of Japan's intentions until several hours after the attack on Port Arthur.

At the beginning of the war, Japan, as a result of its recruiting laws, had a highly trained frontline army. Meanwhile, Russia had far fewer soldiers in the region at the time. Russia, however, had a huge reserve army, in the West of the country that could only come to support the Russian troops in the East after a long journey across the continent. Whether or not Russian leaders would be able to transport reserve troops in time by using the newly built Trans-Siberian Railway was a question crucial to the tactics of both sides in this conflict.

***Committee will begin shortly after the Battle of Port Arthur.***

**Questions to consider as you begin research:***How will Russia consolidate its colonial holdings and spheres of influence in East Asia? Will Russia underestimate the strength and numbers of the Japanese? Will Russia be able to transport its troops from the West to the East of the country should the need arise?*

### Helpful Links:

<https://www.history.com/topics/asian-history/russo-japanese-war>

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Russo-Japanese-War>

### **Committee Roles**

**Nicholas II:** Czar of Russia and leader of the Russian Army

**Aleksey Kuropatkin:** Russian Imperial Minister of War and field commander

**Roman Kondratenko:** Russian General known for his devout service in the Battle of Port Arthur

**Anatoly Stessel:** Baron and military leader of German Descent

**Oskar Gripenberg:** Finnish-Swedish general of the Russian Second Manchurian Army

**Yevgeni Ivanovich Alekseyev:** Admiral in the Imperial Russian Navy and viceroy of the Far East

**Stepan Osipovich Makarov:** Russian naval commander of the Pacific fleet

**Sergei Witte:** Russian diplomat and ambitious politician

**Roman Rosen:** Russian diplomat in Tokyo at the start of the Russo-Japanese War

**Wilhelm Vitgeft:** Russo-German admiral in the Imperial Russian Navy

**Robert Virenz:** Naval officer in the Imperial Russian Navy

**Zinovy Rozhdestvensky:** Russian admiral of the Imperial Russian Navy