

Hilton 2019

Territories and Foreign Intervention

Committee Overview

Our committee will be run Harvard style, which means pre-written resolutions are not allowed. Resolutions written prior to the start of the committee will not be accepted and delegates who have them will not be considered for awards. We recommend delegates write at least one position paper so they are eligible for awards, however they should have a working knowledge of all of the topics to make committee more enjoyable.

Territories and Foreign Intervention (TFI) is one of the principal organs of the United Nations. TFI works to settle territorial disputes around the globe and maintain the sovereignty of all nations, regions, and peoples. Please keep this in mind while researching and writing position papers. Delegates should be well informed on their country's policies on the topics and should stick to them throughout the conference. Remember to have some fun with this; Model UN is about more than just awards!

Committee Description

Territorial Disputes and Human Rights Violations in the Western Sahara

Multinational Dispute over Socotra Island

Demarcation Disputes in the Fergana Valley

Sovereignty Rights over the Kuril Islands

Chairs

Jasmine Kiley | jxkiley@gmail.com

Anna Fetter | aefetter@gmail.com

Hello delegates! My name is Jasmine Kiley, and I'm a senior at Penfield High School. I've been in MUN for 4 years, and this is my third time chairing. Along with MUN, I swim, compete in math league, play violin, teach swim lessons, and eat ice cream. Anna and I are so excited to meet you all, and please contact us with any questions you may have!

Hey! My name is Anna Fetter and I'm a junior at Mercy. This will be my first time chairing. Beyond MUN, I run cross country and track as well as lifeguarding and being a volunteer at St. Paul's church and Camp Bayview. Don't hesitate to email us if you have any questions.

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Territorial Disputes and Human Rights Violations in the Western Sahara



There has been an ongoing conflict in Western Sahara, a sparsely-populated deserted region on the Northwest coast of Africa. Its legal status has been unresolved since the end of the Spanish occupation, with claims from both the kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front, which is composed mainly of indigenous Saharawi people. Morocco now controls two-thirds of Western Sahara in the western portion and claims it is a part of its historical territory.

The Sahara Arab Democratic Republic, declared by the Polisario Front in 1976, is a group started by Sahrawis as an insurgency and its first government. It is recognized by many nations as a full member of the African Union.

There have been several human rights violations in the region, especially in regard to protesters. Moroccan authorities systematically prevent gatherings of Sahrawis rallying for their right to self determination, obstruct the work of human rights NGOs, and often use police force excessively to break up protests. The penal code maintains prison as punishment for nonviolent speech offenses, including for “causing harm” to Islam, the monarchy, and “inciting against” Morocco’s “territorial integrity,” a reference to its claim to Western Sahara.

UNHRC estimates 90,000 Sahrawi refugees live in camps in Tindouf, in Southern Algeria. Many refugees have also migrated to Spain and Italy.

All referendums thus far have failed and brokered proposals have been rejected by the parties. For instance, Morocco rejects a referendum on independence, but proposes a measure of autonomy under its rule.

The United Nations currently classifies Western Sahara as a “non-self-governing territory”, considers the Polisario Front to be the legitimate representative of the Sahrawi people, and maintains that the Sahrawis have a right to self-determination.

How can the UN work to protect the human rights of the people living in Western Sahara? How can the UN mediate negotiations between the SADR and Morocco without infringing on national sovereignty? How can the UN help ensure the right to self determination to the inhabitants of Western Sahara?

Sources:

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/morocco/western-sahara>

<https://www.unocha.org/middle-east-and-north-africa-romena/western-sahara>

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Western-Sahara>

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Multinational Dispute over Socotra Island



The Socotra archipelago is a place of dispute between Yemen and Somalia, particularly on the largest of its four islands: Socotra. The archipelago is located between the Guardafui Channel and the Arabian Sea, and is extremely close to major shipping routes.

The territory containing the Socotra archipelago is officially part of Yemen. The Socotra Governorate has only existed since 2013, as Socotra was previously part of two other governorates.

In 2015, two cyclones ravaged the island, damaging infrastructure, homes, roads, and power. In response to calls by the Gulf Cooperation Council, the United Arab

Emirates sent supplies to Socotra. Aside from this, Socotra received very little international support because the majority of media coverage was focused on the Yemeni Crisis, which began in 2011 and is still ongoing today.

The UAE increased delivery of supplies in 2016, while also establishing a military base on the island as part of the Saudi-led intervention to aid the president of Yemen, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi. Yemeni political factions accused the UAE of looting in 2017, claiming that the Emirati forces destroyed the flora of the island. In the spring of 2018, the UAE invaded Socotra Island, taking over the airport and seaport, and was soon joined by Saudi troops. The UAE and Yemen negotiated a deal that returned the airport and seaport to Yemeni control and established a joint military training exercise between the nations.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE are now attempting to impose sovereignty over the island of Socotra by outdoing each other in humanitarian aid. Additionally, in March of 2019, Yemeni Governor of the Al-Mahwit governorate, Saleh Samei, called for an end to the alliance between Yemen and the UAE. There are claims that the UAE has been forming armed militias in three Yemeni provinces.

With the current famine in Yemen and the ongoing civil war, it is imperative that the UN helps end the dispute over the Socotra Island and achieve diplomatic peace between Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

What can the UN do to ensure the safety and wellness of the residents of Socotra if the UAE and Saudi Arabia stop providing humanitarian aid? How can TFI aid negotiations over who has rights to the Socotra Archipelago without infringing on national sovereignty? How can the situation in the Socotra Archipelago be resolved without escalating the crisis in mainland Yemen?

Sources:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190326-saudi-arabia-uae-dispute-over-yemen-island-of-socotra/>

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190313-yemen-official-calls-for-ending-alliance-with-uae/>

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/12/28/10-conflicts-to-watch-in-2019-yemen-syria-afghanistan-south-sudan-venezuela-ukraine-nigeria-cameroon-iran-israel-saudi-arabia-united-states-china-kurds-yppq/>

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Demarcation Disputes in the Fergana Valley



Central Asia is a tangle of complex and disputed borders, particularly in the Fergana Valley, where multiple enclaves are struggling to exist. Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan hold historic and economic claims to the valley's transport routes and natural resources. The presence of such assets in the Fergana Valley combined with it being the most densely populated region in Central Asia makes it extremely valuable compared to other Central Asian land claims. Past negotiations between the three nations have been tense and prone to conflict.

Modern-day disputes in the Fergana Valley stem from just after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The new demarcations were set with the intent to establish political units on a mono-ethnic basis, even though various peoples had lived side-by-side in the region for hundreds of years under the province of Transoxiana, a part of the Persian Empire. When the newly negotiated borders left many Uzbek populations outside of Uzbekistan, frustration from the stranded Uzbeks escalated until a conflict over land erupted in 1990 between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in south-western Kyrgyzstan. The skirmish evolved into large-scale ethnic violence, recurring in 2010. The post-Soviet Union concept of national delimitation is the source of today's inter-ethnic tensions.

In addition to the Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, and Tajiks, there are several ethnic exclaves in the Fergana Valley, such as the Kyrgyz exclave of Barak in Uzbekistan, the Tajik exclaves of Vorukh and Kairagach in Kyrgyzstan, and the Uzbek exclaves of Sox, Shakhimardan, Chong-Kara, and Jani-Ayil in Kyrgyzstan.

Tensions over water have added to the ethnic conflicts. The border between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in Jalal-Abad Region is open in a limited way to aid irrigation. Unfortunately, inter-ethnic disputes at the border often escalate into national border disputes. The summer months bring increasing tensions because there is not enough water to share.

In light of the increasing conflicts and numerous ethnic groups involved in demarcation disputes, the UN has a responsibility to step in and aid the dissolution of the tensions.

What can TFI do to facilitate discussions between Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan over revised demarcations? How can the UN ensure the protection of the cultures of various ethnic groups in the Fergana Valley? What measures can be taken to bring adequate and equitable distribution of water and other resources to the enclaves and exclaves in the valley?

Sources:

<https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/central-asia-complexities-fergana-valley>

<https://www.rferl.org/a/uzbekistan-kyrgyzstan-resolving-decades-old-border-dispute/28918059.html>

<https://jamestown.org/program/border-disputes-in-the-ferghana-valley-threaten-to-undermine-regional-trade-and-stability/>

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Sovereignty Rights over the Kuril Islands



The Kuril Islands are located between the Russian Kamchatka Peninsula and the Japanese Island of Hokkaido. The disputed territory consists of four separate islands: Iturup, known in Japanese as Etorofu, Kunashir, or Kunashiri, Shikotan, and the islet group of Habomai.

Historically, the Kuril Islands were originally inhabited by the Ainu people. They were later settled by both the Japanese and Russians after further exploration in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The 1855 Treaty of Shimoda gave control of the four southernmost islands to Japan while Russia gained control of the rest of the island chain. However, in the 1875 Treaty of Saint Petersburg, Russia relinquished their control of the Kuril Islands to Japan in favor of uncontested control of Sakhalin Island.

The islands were ceded to Soviet Forces following Japan's surrender to the allied forces at the end of World War II through the Yalta agreements. This was later formalized by the 1951 Treaty of Peace with Japan. As a result, the Japanese inhabitants of the islands were repatriated and replaced with Soviets.

Repeatedly, Japan has tried to persuade Russia, formally the Soviet Union until 1991, to return the islands to Japanese sovereignty. Japan still claims historical rights to the southernmost islands. Although the Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration of October 1956 formally ended hostilities and opened diplomatic relations between the two sides, the dispute of sovereignty rights of the Kuril Islands is primarily the reason for Japan and Russia having never signed a peace treaty following World War II.

As of 2019, Prime Minister Abe of Japan and President Putin of Russia are trying to negotiate a future peace treaty for the sake of economic cooperation benefits, but have failed to reach any major breakthrough in the long-standing territorial dispute.

What can TFI do to encourage a resolution about the Kuril Islands between Russia and Japan without infringing on national sovereignty? How can the UN protect peace during these negotiations? What steps can the UN take to protect the inhabitants of the island in the event that ownership of the islands shifts?

Sources:

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Kuril-Islands>

<https://tass.com/world/1041010>

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/06/29/national/politics-diplomacy/abe-putin-upbeat-bilateral-ties-progress-territorial-dispute-continues-elude/#.XSSDwbzYrnE>