



SIMUN X

St. Ignatius Model United Nations

Tenth Annual Conference

SPECPOL

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Hello Delegates,

Hello and welcome to the 2011 St. Ignatius Model United Nations conference, and welcome to SPECPOL. On behalf of the dais, I can tell you how excited we are to be your chairs for this conference. We look forward to the debates of the topics of Israel and Palestine and the militarization of space.

Since we are a branch of the General Assembly, we are going to be a larger committee. Because of that, we encourage you to thoroughly research your topics and read the background guide on SPECPOL. Feel free to contact either the chair or the political officer if you have any questions.

Both your political officer and chair have had experience in all sorts of committees and even in SPECPOL, so we understand what the delegates will be going through during this conference. We know the rules of Model UN well, so if you have any questions regarding parliamentary procedure, feel free to ask us during the conference to clear up any questions.

And we as your dais just have one request, respect your fellow delegates. After all, we are all here to have fun and enjoy being in a Model United Nations.

We hope that you will enjoy the topics we have chosen and will be excited for SIMUN. We can't wait to see you there.

Good MUNing,

David Quateman and Sam Miller

SPECPOL

Topic A: Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Territory

Introduction:

Since the creation of the Israeli state in 1948, the nations of Israel and Palestine have been in conflict. During its beginning years, Israel was the target of attacks by almost all of its neighbors, but most specifically Syria and Egypt. After fending off multiple invaders during two wars in a short time period, the Middle East settled down and began to accept Israel. But this was not the end of their problems. The Palestinian people started to claim back the land the Israel annexed during the wars. These areas, officially under Israeli control, but largely or historically Palestinian, have caused most of the issues that plague the two nations today. These areas are the Golan Heights, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. As delegates in SPECPOL, it will be your job to find a resolution to this problem of land dispute.

History:

The Six-Day war was the conflict that started the Israeli policy of occupation and settlements. After pulling victory from the hands of defeat, Israel ended up occupying the Golan Heights, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and until 1982, the Sinai Peninsula(sixdaywar.org).

Almost immediately after the end of the Six-Day War, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 242, which among other things called for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from occupied areas from the Six-Day War and also an end to nations claiming other nations land as their own in the area(sixdaywar.org).

Also after the Six-Day War, Israel passed the Jerusalem Law, which officially integrated East Jerusalem into Israel. It also made Jerusalem the capital of Israel and the seat of the government, among other things(jewishvirtuallibrary.org).

When this resolution was presented, the Arab League fully rejected this, and after their summit they produced the Khartoum Resolution, which included the three famous no's. No peace with

Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with them. These policies stayed largely in effect until the Yom Kippur War. That war involved Syria attempting to take back the Golan Heights area by force along with Egypt and many other Arab countries. Again, Israel pushed back its aggressors(sixdaywar.org).

This war led to the Camp David Accords, in which Egypt and Israel met under a banner of truce

The returning of the Sinai Peninsula was a large step in relations between Egypt and Israel. With the returning of the territory came the recognition of Israel by Egypt and the ending of the “state of war” which had lasted since the late 1940’s. Also following the Yom Kippur War, a small section of land was returned to Syria(sixdaywar.org).

From the end of the Yom Kippur War, there have been few changes regarding land under Israel’s control. It was not until 2005 that Israel formally disengaged from not only the Gaza Strip, but also a few settlements in the West Bank region. This was done to promote relations with the Palestinian Authority’s new leader, Mahmoud Abbas. This marked the end of the military occupation of the Gaza Strip(mfa.gov.il).

With the withdrawal of the Israeli military, gaps in security were created. This allows the Islamist organization Hamas to fill the vacuum left by the Israelis.

Current Status

Since 2005, Hamas has been a major problem as far as aggressive actions against Israel. Since 2005, they have launched many attacks, mostly suicide bombs, killing well over 100 combined(cbsnews.com).

There has been a continuing separation of the people and the military. In order to meet with the deadline set for the evacuation of the Gaza Strip, Israeli soldiers were sent in to make sure that the people evacuated. In one instance, an officer was wounded when stabbed in the arm by an Israeli citizen.

While peace talks have been attempted, they are almost always initiated by Israel. These talks have proved fruitless, as Palestine has refused to cooperate on the basis that Israel is illegally occupying their lands(businessweek.com).

In 2011 Palestine attempted to pass a UN Resolution that would condemn all Israeli settlements as illegal. This draft passed in the General Assembly, but for the first time in history, the United States used its veto power to reject the draft, stating that it would harm peace talks if passed(un.org).

Currently, there are approximately 121 Israeli settlements and 102 Israeli outposts built illegally on Palestinian land. These settlements have been growing rapidly in compared to Israel itself, with almost double the growth rate seen in the West Bank as in mainland Israel.

The most recent Palestinian terrorist attack involved a brutal knife assault on a Israeli family. This has prompted Israel to increase their settlements, to help secure the safety of its people. By doing this, they have made peace talks all the more unlikely(latimes.com).

The most recent news regarding these two states involves Palestine's newest bid for U.N. recognition. While this has generally been a symbolic move in the past, usually getting vetoed in the Security Council, it seems more likely that it could pass through the United Nations. Palestine is hoping to capitalize on the fact that new governments have risen up in the Middle East, each with more opposition towards Israel than its previous regime(www.guilfordian.com).

Bloc Positions

China is one of the strongest opponents to Israel. They have stated many times that they will use their Security Council veto power to stop any resolution favoring Israel.

The United States, while their most recent UN would seem to state otherwise, deplores the Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory. They have tried multiple times to create peace talks, but each time setbacks have occurred. Canada sides with them on these issues also.

Russia has asked Israel many times to stop the expansion of their settlements, and is willing to use its veto power to back that statement up.

Almost every Arab nation speaks out against Israel and wishes to see the reestablishment of the Palestinian state.

Questions To Consider

1. What are the Israeli settlements doing to the infrastructure of the Palestinian state?
2. What can the international community do to discourage, with greater effects, the expansion of Israeli settlements?
3. How can peace talks be more fruitful for either side?
4. What action should the Security Council take if its actions are continuing to fail to gain support?
5. What roles should neighboring Arab nations take in these relations?

Recommended Sources

For information regarding the status of your country, the CIA World Factbook is a great place to start. It gives information from oil exports to past international issues. Also look at your country's embassy's homepage. It will give you more facts about the country, and also how they view themselves. The embassy's homepage will also give you contact information for the ambassador to the United States for your country, if you wish to contact them. Also check out http://search.un.org/search?ie=utf8&site=un.org&output=xml_no_dtd&client=UN_Website_en&num=10&lr=lang_en&proxystylesheet=UN_Website_en&oe=UTF-8&q=israel%20palestinians&Submit=Go&ip=157.150.185.24&access=p&sort=date%3AD%3AL%3Ad1&entq=3&ud=1 for any UN related actions involving Israel and Palestine.

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Topic B: The Militarization of Space

Introduction

The topic of the militarization of space has not been debated in the United Nations on any truly notable scale as of today, but there have been some resolutions passed. Essentially, we will be deciding whether space is public or private property, and whether or not to allow weapons in Earth's orbit.

History

During the Cold War, the USA, as well as the USSR, dedicated many resources to the development of space technologies and weapons. Both of the countries developed offensive as well as defensive weapons that were meant to use and abuse satellites in space, and this was unsettling to both countries involved, as well as countries who had no hand in the situation at the time.

The US launched a series of space programs including the Nike-Zeus program, which involved the firing of nuclear missiles at other oncoming missiles, with the intention of detonating both the oncoming missile and the fired missile over the north pole, away from the general population. The USSR also developed ways of gaining control over space, such as the FOBS, or Fractional Orbital Bombardment System, which could bomb North America from space in theory.

Modern Happenings

Most recently, the UN has decided that space should not be militarized in a resolution in 2001. "The exploration and use of outer space ... shall be for peaceful purposes and shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development. ... [The] prevention of an arms race in outer space would avert a grave danger for international peace and security" (Globalissues.org). While this is all well and good, many world leaders insist this resolution will not be long lived. For instance,

Commander-in-Chief of US Space Command, Joseph W. Ashy, states that "It's politically sensitive, but it's going to happen. Some people don't want to hear this, and it sure isn't in vogue, but—absolutely—we're going to fight in space. We're going to fight from space and we're going to fight into space. That's why the US has development programs in directed energy and hit-to-kill mechanisms. We will engage terrestrial targets someday—ships, airplanes, land targets—from space."(Globalissues.org).

The sides of the argument are as follows: should the UN condemn the militarization of space, or allow countries to expand into the great unknown without interference?

Bloc Positions

As of today, bloc positions are not incredibly developed because of the nature of the topic, but some super powers, such as the USA and China, have a very outward stance, who both support the militarization of space. Other nations have a less developed stance on the topic, but concerns none the less.

Questions to Consider

- 1) What is your country's stance on the topic?
- 2) If your country does not have a stance per se, what actions do your allies feel should be taken?
- 3) What role should the UN take in this matter?

Sources

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