



BALKH MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2019

# United Nations Security Council

Background Guide



Dear Delegates,

On behalf of Youth Empowered Society & Secretariat of BMUN 2019, it's my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the Balkh Model United Nations 2019, to be held in Mazar-i-Sharif, Balkh on 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

Balkh Model United Nations provides delegate to express their opinions regarding a very large scale of issues and gives the unique opportunity to tackle those issues with innovative ideas. It's expected from you to do an attentive research in order to come up with innovative and applicable solutions to the issues you have been given. This is a tremendous event to hone your MUN skills, meet lifelong friends and have unforgettable experiences.

In this background guide, you are going to find some general information regarding your committee's topics. However, it's impossible to know everything, so please do not limit yourself with this background guide. Always remember, that there is so much to discover and so much to learn.

Lastly, I must say that I am very excited to be working with you and I am looking forward to seeing the passionate and resolution –driven debate, diplomatic cooperation and inventive solutions that will come out of this conference. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any question or concern you may have regarding this committee or Balkh MUN. Hope to see you all in near future.

Sayed Murtaza Hashimi  
Founder & President  
Balkh Model United Nations 2019

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## Committee Overview

Short definition of the **Security Council**: A permanent **council** of the United Nations with primary responsibility for maintaining peace and **security**.

### History:

On 25 April 1945, the [UN Conference on International Organization](#) began in San Francisco, attended by 50 governments and a number of non-governmental organizations involved in drafting the United Nations Charter.

The UN officially came into existence on 24 October 1945 upon ratification of the Charter by the five then-permanent members of the Security Council and by a majority of the other 46 signatories. On 17 January 1946, the Security Council met for the first time at [Church House, Westminster](#), in London, United Kingdom.

### Membership:

The Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 Members, and each Member has one vote. Most Security Council resolutions are adopted by vote. The Security Council originally consisted of 11 members—five **permanent** members (the Republic of China [Taiwan], France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and six **nonpermanent** members elected by the UN General Assembly for two-year terms. Under the Charter of the United Nations, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions.

### Authority:

The Security Council takes the lead in determining the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression. It calls upon the parties to a dispute to settle it by peaceful means and recommends methods of adjustment or terms of settlement. In some cases, the Security Council can resort to imposing sanctions or even authorize the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security.

### Resolutions:

United Nations resolutions are formal expressions of the opinion or will of United Nations organs. They generally consist of two clearly defined sections: a preamble and an operative part. The preamble generally presents the considerations on the basis of which action is taken, an opinion expressed or a directive given. The operative part states the opinion of the organ or the action to be taken.

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## Topic A: Environmental Migration as a Concern for Peace and Security

**Environmental migrants** are people who are forced to leave their home region due to sudden or long-term changes to their local environment. These are changes which compromise their well-being or secure livelihood. Such changes are held to include increased droughts, desertification, sea level rise, and disruption of seasonal weather patterns (i.e. monsoons). Climate refugees may choose to flee to or migrate to another country, or they may migrate internally within their own country.

Sudden or progressive changes in the environment, often as a consequence of global climate change, are likely to have an adverse effect on existing migration patterns and the number of migrants. It is hard to single out environmental change as one of the many factors in peoples' decisions to stay or to move. Nevertheless, environmental degradation and climate change are increasingly affecting other root causes of migration, such as sociopolitical instability, food insecurity, and conflict. Migration and displacement bring opportunities and can serve as a reasonable adaptation mechanism to changing environments, but they also create risks for people, communities, and states. Environmental change and its effects on human migration are therefore of concern for international political stability, peace, and security

Because of the lack of a definition and methodological precision, there are no reliable estimates of the number of people who qualify as environmental migrants. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre estimates that “since 2008, an average of 26.4 million people per year have been displaced from their homes by disasters brought on by natural hazards.” The IOM states that in 2008, 20 million persons have been “displaced by extreme weather events,” and refers to forecasts that “vary from 25 million to 1 billion environmental migrants by 2050.”

The linkage between migration and international peace and security is, similarly, not entirely unambiguous:

- Citing acts of extremism, violence, crime, or international terrorism committed by migrants and members of minority groups, there are some groups that claim international migration is a threat to peace and security.
- Irregular cross-border migration (movements “outside of the regulatory norms of the sending, transit, or receiving countries”) can be regarded as a threat to state sovereignty and security.
- Migration can be the result or side effect of the activities of organized criminal networks.
- Of 103 ethnic conflicts between 1945 and 2005, 32 were characterized by violence between members of ethnic groups who consider themselves indigenous on one side and recent migrants on the other side.

On the other hand, migration can have positive effects on political and economic security where it helps economic development, increasing life quality and human security, for example by mitigating shortages in the labor force of receiving societies. Diaspora groups, as a direct result of migration, can also have positive effects on their regions of origin, most prominently in the form of transfer of capital (remittances) or knowledge. A more critical perspective, however,

points out that diaspora migrants can play an important role in initiating, escalating, or prolonging conflicts in their regions of origin, or even export those conflicts to other regions.

In Syria, global warming played a key role in generating the conditions that precipitated the civil war behind the refugee crisis. Between 2006 and 2011, up to 60% of Syria's land suffered the worst long-term drought ever recorded in the region, combined with a widespread phenomenon of crop failures. In the northeast of the country, herders lost an average of "85% of their livestock, affecting 1.3 million people." According to a study included in the 2011 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction, 75% of Syrian families dependent on agriculture suffered total crop failure, and one million Syrians were left food-insecure. In 2010, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter, reported that, overall, the drought drove two to three million people into extreme poverty.

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#### **An advice for the delegates:**

It is advisable for delegates to focus their research and policy formulation on the following key questions: How can the phenomenon "environmental migration" best be defined and integrated into the international refugee and migration policy framework? In what forms can migration become a tangible concern for international peace and security? How could the Security Council become active to manage migration and mitigate involuntary displacement? How can the Security Council cooperate with key international organizations and Member States with a stake in the environmental migration-security nexus?

**Further reading and resources:**

<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/>

<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/resolutions-adopted-security-council-2019>

<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/procedures-and-working-methods>

<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/functions-and-powers>

<http://www.un.org/en/sc/members/>

<http://www.unfoundation.org/what-we-do/issues/united-nations/the-un-security-council.html>.

Jacobson, Thomas. "U.N. Peacekeeping: Few Successes, Many Failures, Inherent Flaws," March 15, 2012.

<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unamsil/index.html>

Bawden, Refugee crisis: Is climate change affecting mass migration, The Independent, 2015.

Femia & Werrell, Syria: Climate Change, Drought and Social Unrest, The Center for Climate & Security, 2012.

Worth, Earth Is Parched Where Syrian Farms Thrived, The New York Times, 2010

Global Commission on International Migration, Migration in an interconnected world: New directions for action, 2005, p. 8.

Ibid. IOM, Key Migration Terms.

INTERPOL & UNEP, Strategic Report: Environment, Peace and Security – A Convergence of Threats, 2016, p. 28.

UN General Assembly, Climate change and its possible security implications: Report of the Secretary-General (A/64/350), 2009, p. 17.

Global Commission on International Migration, Migration in an interconnected world: New directions for action, 2005, p. 8.

German Advisory Council on Global Change, Climate Change as a Security Risk, 2008, p. 121.

## **Topic B: Protection of civilians in armed conflict**

International humanitarian law (the laws of war) defines “civilians” as those persons who are not members of military or paramilitary forces or fighters of organized armed groups of a party to a conflict. Civilians may lose protection against attacks for such time as they take direct part in hostilities.

The Midyear Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict documents attacks against categories of people whose regular activities do not amount to direct participation in hostilities, including public servants and government workers, teachers, health clinic workers, election workers and others involved in public service delivery, political figures and office-holders, and employees of NGOs, as well as civilian police personnel who are not directly participating in hostilities and are not involved in counter-insurgency operations.

The report identifies multiple sources of civilian casualties including ground engagements, Improvised Explosive Devices, suicide and complex attacks, targeted killings, explosive remnants of war, aerial operations, summary executions and cross-border shelling.

The report divides parties causing civilian casualties into three categories: Anti-Government Elements, Government of Afghanistan and International Military Forces.

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The report is prepared pursuant to the UNAMA (UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN) mandate under United Nations Security Council Resolution 2210 (2015) to monitor the situation of civilians, to coordinate efforts to ensure their protection, to promote accountability, and to assist in the full implementation of the fundamental freedoms and human rights provisions of the Afghan Constitution and international treaties to which Afghanistan is a State party, in particular those regarding the full enjoyment by women of their human rights.

Security Council resolution 2210 (2015) recognizes the importance of ongoing monitoring and reporting to the United Nations Security Council on the situation of civilians in the armed conflict, particularly on women and children.

The report includes recommendations to the parties to support their efforts to protect civilians and civilian communities, and prevent civilian casualties.

Some 97 per cent of humanitarian assistance goes to complex emergencies, the majority of which involve armed conflicts. Globally, more than 65 million people have been displaced by conflict, violence or persecution. More than 20 million people, including 1.4 million children, are on the brink of famine in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen. At the same time, among the international community there is a growing sense of fatigue, even resignation, in addressing the suffering of civilians in conflict.



During the period under review, the Security Council held four meetings and adopted one presidential statement under the item entitled “Protection of civilians in armed conflict”. In its deliberations, the Council discussed such issues as the role of peacekeeping missions in the protection of civilians, compliance with international humanitarian law by non-State armed groups, humanitarian assistance and accountability for crimes committed against civilians in the context of armed conflicts. The deliberations of the Council on the protection of civilians acquired particular relevance in 2011, in the light of the political and social uprisings in the Middle East. In decisions relating to country-specific and other thematic items, the Council included a number of provisions concerning the protection of civilians, confirming a trend of increased mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues into its decisions.

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### **5 Guiding questions for the delegates:**

- Has your country experienced war or violent conflicts in the last decades and if so, how did these events affect the civilian population in your country?
- Can your country offer best practice examples for the protection of the civilian population in violent conflicts?
- What is your country's position on concepts like humanitarian intervention and the responsibility to protect?
- Is your country currently involved in UN peacekeeping operations and if so, in which way?
- Are there civil society actors from your country who can contribute to the protection of civilians in armed conflicts?

**Further reading and resources:**

<https://unama.unmissions.org/poc>

<http://hrp.law.harvard.edu/areas-of-focus/arms-armed-conflict/>

Security Council (2017): Report of the Secretary General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, S/2017/414 (10 May 2017), retrieved from: <http://undocs.org/S/2017/414> (20th of December 2017)

<https://www.icrc.org/en/document/protection-civilians-armed-conflict>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civilian>

Hugo Slim, *Killing Civilians: Method, Madness and Morality in War*, Hurst, London, 2008.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental\\_migrant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_migrant)

Boano, C., Zetter, R., and Morris, T., (2008). Environmentally Displaced People: Understanding the linkages between environmental change, livelihoods and forced migration, *Refugee Studies Centre Policy Brief No.1* (RSC: Oxford), pg.4

"Before the Flood" Sujatha Byravan and Sudhir Chella Rajan, [The New York Times](#), 9 May 2005.



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