

MSMUN

UNSC

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

Chair: Valeria Osorno and Mariana Valencia.

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Topic: Islamic State threats: Global efforts to counter terrorism.

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1. Welcoming letter

Dear delegates,

It is an honor for us, Valeria Osorno and Mariana Valencia, to welcome you to the Security Council for MSMUN 2021's in-house model. This commission is the smallest of them all, yet it will force you to perform to the best of your abilities. For this model, we have chosen a very demanding topic regarding situations that are constantly evolving and posing a threat to international security. Therefore, it requires adequate preparation and active participation from all of you.

Our expectations are set high and we are exhilarated to see what you can achieve during this day of debate. Throughout our years of experience in Models of the United Nations, we've realized the impact these opportunities have on our growth and development, both academically and socially speaking. Our main objective is that you, as delegates, can have a transformative encounter in which you are forced to push boundaries. We hope this experience is as enriching for you as it is for us, and that you are able to develop different skills such as public speaking, critical thinking, investigation and problem solving.

If you have any concerns, feel free to contact us, we will be more than happy to help you. We are confident you have the potential needed to succeed and "make the impossible possible". Without further ado, welcome to MSMUN 2021.

Sincerely,

Valeria Osorno & Mariana Valencia,

Your chair.

2. Committee's information

2.1 History

The history of the Security Council goes back to 1944. Three powerful nations, China, the United Kingdom and the United States, agreed on the necessity to create a structure that would always seek to maintain international peace and security. Once the Charter of the United Nations came into force, the Security council was formally established on October 24th, 1945. The Security Council is one of the six main organs of the United Nations and held its first session on January 17th, 1946, at Church House, Westminster, London.

2.2 Objective

Under the United Nations Charter, the functions and powers of the Security Council are:

- to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations;
- to investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction;
- to recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement;
- to formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments;
- to determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken;
- to call on Members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggression;
- to take military action against an aggressor;
- to recommend the admission of new Members;
- to exercise the trusteeship functions of the United Nations in "strategic areas";

- to recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice.

The UNSC can also install UN Peacekeeping Operations (known as “Blue Helmets”) in affected areas around the globe, as well as Special Political Missions. It also tries to promote friendly relationships among countries, protecting human rights and the self-determination of the people, always aiming towards international cooperation. The council can also grant jurisdiction to the International Court of Justice to act within any territory where it deems it necessary. (Zhao, 2017)

2.3 Performance, structure and procedure

The first session took place in New York, in 1946 and from this day on it's one of the most important yet smallest committees on the UN. With only fifteen members, and five of them appointed permanent, the other 10 members vary and are elected every two years as follows: 3 representatives for Africa, 2 representatives for Asia, 2 representatives for Latin America, 2 representatives for Western Europe, and 1 representative for Eastern Europe. Such a system has proven to be inconsistent, as there are cases when a country that is affected by a situation but is not a current member is not allowed to vote. Nevertheless, they may participate in the debates and give their opinions.

Currently the members of this committee are: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, Vietnam and the five permanent countries, also known as “Veto Powers” which are: The United States of America, Russia (formerly the Soviet Union), France, the United Kingdom, and the People's Republic of China.

The following is the procedure that needs to be followed on the Security Council:

- Roll call: the chair makes sure all delegates are present for the debate.
- Motion to open session: this motion is taken into account if 50% +1 of the delegations are present.
- Open Agenda: here, the delegates established which topic is going to be debated first.
- Motion for the reading of Opening Speeches: the speeches are read in alphabetical order.
- Moderated caucus: an informal debate where delegations are free to speak when the chair recognizes them.
- Unmoderated caucus: a lobby time where delegates can freely discuss the topic at hand and form alliances.
- Speaker's list: a formal debate with a list of speakers previously established.
- Motion to read working papers/press releases: heads of block read the resolutions given during the debate.
- Motion to close session: to end the session previously established.

3. Islamic State threats: Global efforts to counter terrorism.

3.1 Theoretical framework

Terrorism: As defined by the UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004), are criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act. (United Nations Security Council, 2004)

Another description of this term is given in the General Assembly resolution 49/60. Measures to eliminate international terrorism.

2. Acts, methods and practices of terrorism constitute a grave violation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, which may pose a threat to international peace and security, jeopardize friendly relations among States, hinder international cooperation and aim at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the democratic bases of society;

3. Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them. (United Nations 1995)

* The term “terrorism” is not a part of the parliamentary language that must be used during the debate, this can be replaced with the term belligerence (Belligerent group, belligerent acts, belligerence). Regardless, the chair recommends that a motion is made to add this word to the parliamentary language so the delegates can use it freely without the need to ask for permission or make use of any points.

ISIS: The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (commonly referred to as IS, ISIL, or ISIS) is a militant group that emerged in 2014 as a derivative from Al Qaeda. It rapidly took over large portions of Iraq and Syria, establishing a strict Shariah Caliphate. They are known

for their brutal tactics as well as their strategic use of social media for recruiting people into their group.

Sunni vs. Shia Islam: Islam is divided into two sub groups (sects) which follow different ideologies. There are 1.5 billion Muslims in the world, of which around 85 percent are part of a sect called Sunni and 15 percent are of a sect called Shia. This division, also known as sectarianism, threatens the stability of the entire Middle East and is one of the sources of the major conflict in the area.

Vladimir Voronkov: The UN's counter-terrorism chief, his job as head of the UNOCT (United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism) is to promote international cooperation and to support Member-States in the fight against terrorism with the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (United Nations, 2021).

UN's Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Also referred to as the UN's Counter-Terrorism Architecture, it is a strategy by the United Nations which is composed of four pillars, which according to the International Center of Counter-Terrorism (n.d) are:

- “Addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism;
- Preventing and combating terrorism;
- Building states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the UN system in this regard;
- Ensuring respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism.”

3.2 History of the topic

The formation of ISIS or the Islamic State as we know it today goes back decades when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979 to defend their dictator against the rebels. However, it is in 2001 that the US invaded Iraq causing chaos and disruption in the Middle East, setting the perfect scene for the rise of an insurgent group, the Sunni insurgency, after the US defeated their dictator, Saddam Hussein. Backed by Zarqawi, the Sunnis started attacking mostly Shia muslims sparking a civil war in Iraq.

Later, Al Qaeda joins Zarqawi with the aim of uniting forces and creating the AQL. Subsequently, thanks to unions and divisions between several Iraqi and Syrian insurgent branches, ISIS is born. In 2014, ISIS was now in control over a third of Iraq and a big part of Syria. Finally, ISIS begins its worldwide recognized terrorist attacks. (Vox, 2015)

* Find timelines of the key events of ISIS history in the useful links.

Throughout its existence, ISIS has been called several names, including:

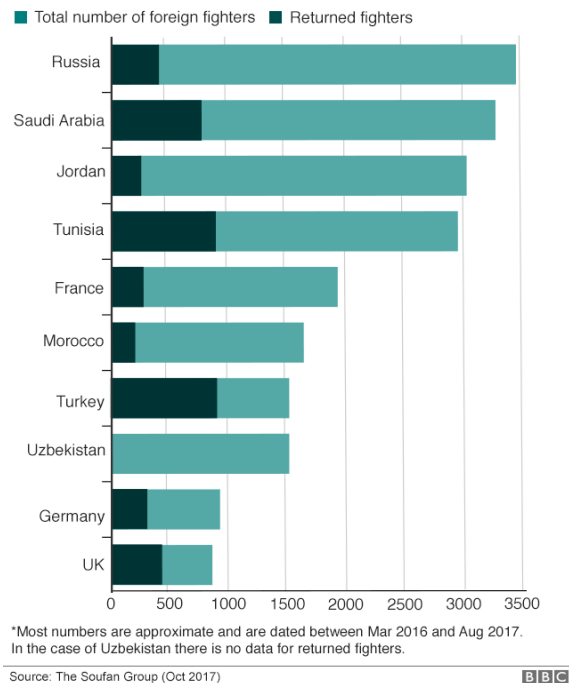
- ISIL: “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.”
- IS: “ Islamic State”
- Daesh: Arabic acronym for ISIS, the group does not approve of this name and does not wish to be referred to as such.

One group, many names. (History, 2017)

ISIS has claimed responsibility for terrorist attacks in the Middle East and in places all around the globe including the following: Paris and Nice, France; Brussels, Belgium; Manchester, England; and others. ISIS has also destroyed various historical sites across Iraq, Syria and Lebanon including various churches, temples, mosques and shrines throughout the Middle East; museums and libraries; Ancient ruins, monuments and buildings.

It is important to note that foreign fighters have been key to the thriving of this group and these have allowed and facilitated many of the well known attacks to this day.

Nationalities of IS foreign fighters



3.3 Previously implemented solutions

The United Nations has established a committee designated to counter terrorism called **UNOCT**. “Across the globe, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) leads and coordinates an all-of-UN approach to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism.” (UN, n.d)

* Go to useful links where the URL will be provided to visit the UNCCT page (UN Counter-Terrorism Centre)

The European Union (EU) has developed its own strategy to combat terrorist acts and groups such as ISIS. Backed by the US it is playing an ever more ambitious role in counter-terrorism.

Other organizations and bodies including the Global Counter-terrorism Forum, the Global Coalition against ISIL/Da'esh, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Council of Europe (CoE) have been working to further the attempts to counter terrorist acts and groups.

3.4 Current situation

Today's world is full of rapidly evolving technology, and it is no surprise that belligerent groups such as the Islamic State have been adapting to it in order to expand their influence.

In August of 2021, an article by the United Nations mentions how Vladimir Voronkov explained how the IS was exploiting the impediments the world was facing because of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to regroup and gain new recruits as to enhance their actions both online and in the real world. The paper points out how the UN's counter-terrorism architecture is increasing its help towards countries with the goal of aiding them to adapt to the "rapidly changing nature of the threat," focusing on how it has become digitalised and de-centralised over the years (United Nations, 2021).

It is important to note that the situation in Afghanistan with the Taliban (a group of which several members have been denominated as terrorists by the Security Council) has allowed the Da'esh to boost their presence in that country, especially since ISIS' attacks have always targeted the State, which in this case, with the US troops and the former Afghan government gone, is the Taliban. According to Samya Kullab (2021), writer for The Diplomat, "[IS] is contemptuous of the Taliban's nationalist goals and doesn't recognize them as a pure Islamic movement. For similar reasons, IS has long been a staunch enemy of al-Qaeda." These groups, although they share very similar ideals regarding their versions of Islamic law, and similar tactics such as suicide bombings, ISIS has been noted to be much harsher with

punishments and to have had a more brutal rule in Iraq and Syria than the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Islamic State has also had an incessant spread across the African continent, where hundreds of civilians have been killed in 2021 alone, and the group has new divisions which it has denominated “The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara” and “West Africa Province” and “ISIS-K” (Afghanistan) in accordance to the regions they are terrorising.

3.5 International response

United States of America: The US finds themselves greatly threatened by the ISIS-K branch as they have continuously threatened large-scale attacks on their withdrawing troops, such an event was the suicide bombing at Kabul Airport in August 26 of 2021. Regarding the deaths of Americans by the hands of these assaults, President Joe Biden (2021) has stated that “[The US] will not forgive. [The US] will not forget. [The US] will hunt you down and make you pay.”

Russian Federation: Before the takeover of the Taliban in Afghanistan, Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu communicated the country was “beefing up” its combat capabilities in its military bases as Moscow warned about IS militants moving into Afghanistan, since the security in the territory had deteriorated amid the US troops withdrawal. Nevertheless, once the neighbouring country was taken over, Russia openly praised the Taliban, arguing they had managed to make the capital of Afghanistan “safer in the first 24 hours after the U.S. exit” (Sitdikov, 2021), all despite the Russian Federation recognising the Taliban as a terrorist group.

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan: In September of 2021, Taliban leaders in Afghanistan claimed there was no evidence of ISIS or Al-Qaeda in their territory. Spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid (2021) stated that "The ISIS that exists in Iraq and Syria does not exist here. Still, some people who may be our own Afghans have adopted the ISIS mentality, which is a phenomenon that the people do not support."

3.6 Future situation

Terrorism has been a constant threat to international security over the last few decades. As previously established, the rise of technology has opened means for groups like ISIS to grow. The international community faces doubt as to what can be done to prevent the escalating of terrorism that would pose an even bigger threat to the wellbeing of people all over the world.

Meanwhile, Africa is at a state of alert. "Alongside Daesh's expansion in Africa and its rapid shift online, Mr. Voronkov also cited the continued detention of thousands of individuals with alleged links to terrorist groups as another factor exacerbating the threat." (UN, 2021)

Several nations demand actions be taken to stop this terrorist group as soon as possible, even if it means using force to achieve it. ISIS is not only considered an extremist group but it is criticized for alleged crimes including crimes against humanity and genocide. "Nobel Peace Prize laureate Nadia Murad, urged the Security Council to refer the matter to the International Criminal Court, "to address the universal magnitude of ISIL crimes against humanity"." (UN, 2021)

4. Useful questions for the delegates

1. Does your country recognize the Islamic State as a terrorist organisation? Why or why not?

2. Does your country find itself currently threatened by terrorist groups such as the IS, or has had history with them?
3. Has your country implemented (or attempted to implement) any measures to counter terrorism? If so, which?
4. How has the COVID-19 Pandemic affected your country's measures against terrorism and its overall security?

5. **QARMAS**

1. Which counter terrorism strategies by the UN have been effective? Should these be taken into account in the future?
2. What parties are more likely to be able to offer aid to those victimised by terrorist organisations?
3. Should a diplomatic approach be taken to counter terrorism, or should it be the use of force? Why?

6. **Useful links**

RAND: The Islamic State

This webpage redirects you to recent news, important events, and definitions regarding the Islamic State.

<https://www.rand.org/topics/the-islamic-state-terrorist-organization.html>

United Nations Office Counter-Terrorism

The official page for the UN's Office of Counter-Terrorism, leads to recent news, important events, and information about different countries and their place in this office.

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

[VOX Video: The rise of ISIS explained in 6 minutes](#)

This short video will allow you to have a general overview of the history of the Islamic State. We recommend those that are not familiar with the topic to watch it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzmO6RWy1v8>

[Britannica and CBC timelines](#)

Get a better chronological understanding of the history that led to the formation of ISIS and the events that have occurred since then that are not only essential to its development but have had a massive impact on international security. Check dates and facts here:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/us-forces-isis-leader-al-baghdadi-timeline-1.5337234>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islamic-State-in-Iraq-and-the-Levant/Expansion-and-declaration-of-a-caliphate>

[UNCCT page](#)

Visit to learn more about the efforts the UN is making to counter terrorism worldwide.

<https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/cct>

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