



# JHUMUNC

THE JOHNS HOPKINS MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOURTH COMMITTEE

*Special Political and Decolonization*

*Chaired by Lance Kotler*

Session XXIII

# General Assembly Fourth Committee Special Political and Decolonization (SPECPOL)

*Topic A: Promoting Peace Through Regional Bodies*

*Topic B: Re-Evaluating the UN Support Mission in Libya*

## Committee Overview

The General Assembly Fourth Committee, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, was established in 1962 for the purpose of upholding and monitoring the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.<sup>1</sup> This declaration was originally implemented in 1960 to affirm all peoples' right to self-determination, or to "freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development," as well as a call for immediate steps to be taken towards granting independence to Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories.<sup>2</sup> Today, that focus has shifted from Trust Territories, countries under rule by another country as agreed upon by the League of Nations post-World War II, to decolonization, the Middle East, and a range of other issues.

SPECPOL has adopted a five-pronged approach to alleviating international issues through its subsidiary committees. These address the effects of atomic radiation, questions relating to information, a comprehensive review of

peacekeeping operations and special political missions, which will be the focus of this year's committee, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Report of the Special Committee on Israeli Practices, and international cooperation on the peaceful uses of outer space.<sup>3</sup> Overall, SPECPOL reaffirms the United Nations' aims to eradicate colonialism and to ensure the political, social, and economic interests of current territories.

The committee meets every year for the UN from late September to mid-November, but also briefly in the spring to adopt any resolutions on peacekeeping passed by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. SPECPOL is open to all 193 UN member states to attend its meetings as well as outside petitioners including civil society representatives and other stakeholders to address the committee on its decolonization issues.

Though primarily focused on decolonization, SPECPOL also addresses many issues directly tied to peacekeeping and support missions. The Special

<sup>1</sup>"The United Nations and Decolonization." *United Nations*, United Nations, [www.un.org/en/decolonization/history.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/history.shtml).

<sup>2</sup>"The United Nations and Decolonization." *United Nations*, United Nations, [www.un.org/en/decolonization/declaration.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/declaration.shtml).

<sup>3</sup>"United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly." *United Nations*, United Nations, [www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/index.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/index.shtml).

Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34), established in 1965 and now with 147 Member States, is dedicated to reviewing UN Peacekeeping Operations and making recommendations to the UN on the issue of peacekeeping, an essential element to their goal of maintaining international peace and global security, and to the two topics we will be discussing.

Topic A, Promoting Peace Through Regional Bodies, is an extremely relevant issue today with interstate conflicts breaking out in different regions of the globe and relations among regions becoming even more important in our increasingly interconnected world. SPECPOL works to promote peace within and between countries towards its objective of international security, and regional bodies will be essential to this issue as terrorism persists, great powers rise, and alliances shift to match the balance of power. Every country is affected by some sort of dispute or conflict that necessitates regional action to resolve, even if not directly a part of the fighting. Therefore, **two** conflict case studies will be used to determine the necessity of regional bodies in each one's resolution and serve as a model for their function in other conflicts of different regions.

Topic B, Re-Evaluating the UN Support Mission in Libya, is crucial to discuss with Libya's continuing civil war and the UN's recent renewal of the mission.<sup>4</sup> With humanitarian rights and security interests at risk, this topic will be central to debate in our committee. Although seemingly isolated to Libya, countries from around the world are involved in the UN support mission, Libya's African and European neighbors are experiencing the effects of refugees, displacement, and conflict, and the Libyan case serves as a lesson for democratic missions in other countries across the globe.

We will work to provide solutions to each topic, in accordance with SPECPOL's values of securing the rights of people while promoting international peace and security. This will include devising methods of peacemaking within regional organizations for different conflicts and deciding on the effectiveness and changes or improvements for the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). Our resolutions should address the political, economic, and social interests of countries involved in order to settle upon the most comprehensive responses to these complex but important global issues.

<sup>4</sup> Yunglun, Shi. "Security Council Renews UN Support Mission in Libya." *Xinhua*, 13 Sept. 2019, [www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/13/c\\_138387790.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/13/c_138387790.htm).



## Topic A: *Promoting Peace Through Regional Bodies*

### Introduction

Topic A, Promoting Peace Through Regional bodies, will cover conflicts from regions across the globe and the peacekeeping bodies of these different areas. Each region faces their own issues, and thus needs carefully created regional solutions to these problems, with input possibly from countries and regions beyond the affected area. Different regional bodies may also work together towards solutions and peace for countries in a certain area.

From conflict in the South and East China Seas, North Korean belligerence, U.S.-China political and economic competition, and Indian-Pakistani military clashes in Kashmir, to the ongoing war in Afghanistan, the Syrian Civil War, persisting Israeli-Palestinian conflict and an Iran-Saudi Arabia Cold War brewing in the Middle East, including in Yemen, Asia is encountering widespread regional conflict. Africa is facing civil war in South Sudan, intrastate violence and Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria, political instability in Libya, and Eritrean and Somalian turmoil. Europe, just north, has its own Ukrainian conflict, ethnic violence spread across the Caucasus region, and separatist movements across the rest of the continent. Even in the Americas, the Venezuelan crisis and drug wars with Colombia and Mexico call for regional and international attention as well.

For each of these regions, there are many important regional bodies that can

address such issues. Some of these organizations include countries from outside the region while others do not, and some also work with other regional bodies within and beyond the region.

In east, south and central Asia, the primary groups would be Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Northeast Asian Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI), East Asian Summit (EAS), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).<sup>5</sup> In the Middle East, the League of Arab States (or Arab League), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and Euro-Med Youth Program are the key actors for peace, cooperation, and humanitarian goals.<sup>6</sup>

In Africa, the African Union is the largest regional body, but other peace and security bodies include the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the East African Standby Force (EASF), and the G5 Sahel (G5S), and some of the prominent economic organizations include the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States

<sup>5</sup> "INTERNATIONAL AND POLITICAL ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS." *Global Survey*, vol. 49, no. 3, ser. 22, Nov. 2019. 22.

<sup>6</sup> Pinfari, Marco. "Regional Organizations in the Middle East." *Oxford Handbooks Online*, Sept. 2016, doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935307.013.86.

(ECCAS), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD).<sup>7</sup>

In Europe, the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are the dominant forces, but there is also the broad Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and Council of Europe (CoE), as well as the more local Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS).

Finally, in the Americas, the largest organization is the Organization of American States (OAS), but NATO also includes the U.S. and Canada, and the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), previously the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), is an important binding force between Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, especially through trade and economic ties. In South and Central America, MERCOSUR (Common Market of the South), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Central American Integration System (CAIS), the Forum for East Asia and Latin American Cooperation (FEALAC), the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), and the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) bind together the regions' different countries.<sup>8</sup>

For this committee, we will be focusing on the South China Sea conflict in East Asia, Syrian Civil War in the Middle East, South Sudanese war and Boko Haram insurgency in Africa, and the drug wars in Venezuela, Colombia, and Mexico. Therefore, the primary organizations in discussion will likely be ASEAN and NAPCI

for the South China Sea, the Arab League for Syria, the African Union and ECOWAS for Africa, and OAS and MERCOSUR for Latin America.<sup>9</sup> However, other regional bodies may also play an important role in bloc formation and alliances towards resolving these conflicts.

As a committee, we should look to address the underlying causes of these conflicts and how different countries can work together within regional bodies to resolve them, if it all. This is a broad topic with many intricate facets, and it is the role of our committee during this conference to create a detailed, comprehensible, and realistic solution.

## Historical Background

This section will seek to explain the reasons behind the development of regional and multilateral organizations in order to shed light on their utility as actors on the international scene.

Peace and war have been a central component of the development of human civilization throughout history. Countries have gone to war to promote their interests, expand their territory, and defend themselves from outside threats, with force as the primary means toward achieving these objectives. More recently, though, has been the establishment of supranational, or multi-country, organizations to work towards peace rather than conflict as the primary method in the international system. Although there were some loosely structured regional bodies and trade pacts earlier in history, the system we know today arose from the onset of the World Wars in

<sup>7</sup> African Union. *African Union Handbook 2019: A Guide for Those Working With and Withing the African Union*. 6th ed., ser. 1, African Union Commission and New Zealand Crown Copyright, 2019.

<sup>8</sup> UN Secretary-General. "United Nations Cooperation with Regional Bodies More Necessity than Aspiration as Integration Grows, Secretary-General Tells Organization of American States."

UN.org, 13 Feb. 2013, [www.un.org/press/en/2013/sgsm14815.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/press/en/2013/sgsm14815.doc.htm).

<sup>9</sup> Panke, Diana. "Regional Power Revisited: How to Explain Differences in Coherency and Success of Regional Organizations in the United Nations General Assembly." *International Negotiation*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 265-291., doi:<https://doi.org/10.1163/15718069-12341256>.



the first half of the 20th century and resulting international cooperation such as through the Bretton Woods Institutions and Soviet Union bloc. We will look at both the establishment of today's regional bodies and their history, as well as the historical factors underlying our conflict case studies.

## *Development of the League of Nations and the UN*

Peace movements within countries such as Britain and France in the 19th century saw the need for an "International Forum" where peace would truly be sustainable.<sup>10</sup> In 1889, their leaders founded the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the first truly international political organization, in order to bring governments together to deliberate on disagreements and thus promote international arbitration and peace.

Meanwhile, the International Peace Bureau (IPB) was created to coordinate each country's peace societies in unison so they could consolidate their movements set up annual Universal Peace Congresses.<sup>11</sup> The IPB ran a large "No More War!" campaign during World War I, and became an international organization dedicated to the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

Following the end of World War I with the Treaty of Versailles, states around the world hoped to never enter another war like it again. President of the United States Woodrow Wilson called for international cooperation for peace in his "14 Points" speech, giving birth to the League of Nations. Its goals were to ensure collective security, functional cooperation, and execute the mandates of peace treaties, all the while learning from "the war to end all

wars." Although successful in mediating the dispute between Finland and Sweden and later between Greece and Bulgaria in the period following the war, the League of Nations did eventually fail. Along with the U.S., the strongest advocate of the League's establishment, never formally joining the organization, it also failed to prevent both the invasion of Manchuria by Japan and the annexations of Ethiopia by Italy in 1936 and of Austria by Hitler in 1938.<sup>12</sup> The next year, Germany, Italy and Japan, along with others, left the organization and its goal of collective security for defensive alliance systems instead, precipitating a shift in the balance of power and a new world war. This failure to prevent future war, in tandem with its alienation of member states, led to its collapse in 1940, with the outbreak of World War II.

Still, the League of Nations did lay the groundwork for future international cooperation and arbitration over settling disputes peacefully. Many of its operations were transferred over to a new institution, created on October 24, 1945, and which still holds strong today: The United Nations.

The UN was originally founded by 51 member states. The original 26 members who signed its declaration were allied against the Axis Powers and promised to use their full resources against them in order to produce one unified peace.<sup>13</sup> This declaration endorsed the U.S. and Great Britain's Atlantic Treaty, which supported transparent treaties, freer trade post-war, self-determination of people to choose their own government (and thus decolonization across many areas), disarmament and collective security.<sup>14</sup> In this spirit, the UN

<sup>10</sup> United Nations Office of Geneva. "UNOG Library, Registry, Records and Archives Unit." *UNOG Library, Registry, Records and Archives Unit*. [www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/\(httpAssets\)/36BC4F83BD9E4443C1257AF3004FC0AE/%24file/Historical\\_overview\\_of\\_the\\_League\\_of\\_Nations.pdf](http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/(httpAssets)/36BC4F83BD9E4443C1257AF3004FC0AE/%24file/Historical_overview_of_the_League_of_Nations.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Office of the Historian of the United States of America. "The Formation of the United Nations, 1945." *U.S. Department of State, history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/un*.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

was born, with a permanent Security Council consisting of the U.S., UK, France, China and Russia, and a General Assembly of all member states, who could also vote on which states could temporarily join or sit in on the security council (6 non-permanent members). Meanwhile, the UN also included an 18-member Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), an International Court of Justice (ICJ), a Secretariat under a Secretary General and a Trusteeship Council, formerly the Permanent Mandates Commission, to oversee certain colonial territories.

Other areas of oversight by the League of Nations were transferred to the UN as well, beyond collective security and economic activities. The Health Organization became the World Health Organization (WHO), the Nutrition Committee evolved into the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the Committee of Intellectual Cooperation became the Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which preserves heritage sites and cultures around the world; and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) carried on the objectives of the League's Nansen Office.<sup>15</sup>

The UN has since grown to 193 members. As of 2019, 10 non-permanent members are elected to the Security Council for two years apiece, there are 53 current members of ECOSOC (3 year terms for each) and 15 members (each with a nine year term) on the ICJ.<sup>16</sup> The Trusteeship Council,

meanwhile, suspended its operations in 1994 with the independence of Palau, the last UN Trust Territory.

## *Regional Organizations*

An essential component of this multilateral framework created by the UN is the necessity of regional cooperation. Despite a seemingly all-encompassing UN as the forefront global body, the UN Secretary-General António Guterres has emphasized that, as integration around the world increases, UN cooperation with regional bodies has become “more necessity than aspiration,” in the case addressing the OAS.<sup>17</sup> In late 2018, the UN Security Council declared that “robust and coherent cooperation among the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organizations will be key in tackling increasingly complex global challenges,” specifically referring to funding African Union-led peace operations and ECOWAS's “Early Alert and Response” system.<sup>18</sup> This system was designed for preventing, managing, and mitigating crisis such as the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, and emphasizes the importance of regional organizations' efforts towards countering escalating conflict, especially as modern threats have become increasingly “multidimensional, interlinked and unpredictable.”<sup>19</sup>

Although the UN set up many of its own bodies, other regional bodies have been created separately and are some of the main players on the world stage today: ASEAN, OAS, the EU, African Union, the League of Arab States, etc. The goal of this committee will be to evaluate regional bodies and their

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Office of Geneva.

<sup>16</sup> Public Inquiries, UN Visitors Center. *Membership of Principal United Nations Organs in 2019*. United Nations Headquarters, 2019, [visit.un.org/sites/visit.un.org/files/fs\\_membership\\_of\\_principal\\_organs\\_in\\_2019.pdf](https://www.visit.un.org/sites/visit.un.org/files/fs_membership_of_principal_organs_in_2019.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> UN Secretary-General.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Security Council. “Speakers in Security Council Call for Robust, Coherent United Nations Cooperation With Regional Bodies as Global Challenges Grow Increasingly Complex.” *United Nations*, 6 Dec. 2018, [www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13609.doc.htm](https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13609.doc.htm).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

response potential to our highlighted conflicts. To do so, it's helpful to investigate the history of some of these key regional organizations: their establishment, successful missions, and persevering goals.

Throughout their time, regional bodies have played a significant role in building peaceful interstate relations and strengthening regional cooperation via economic integration, political alignment, and common goals. And as the world develops, they will continue to be essential actors in deciding the outcome of, and even preventing, interstate wars.

The "first" regional organization was the Organization of American States (OAS), founded on April 30, 1948, in Bogota, Colombia. Its goal was to protect regional security in the Western Hemisphere and promote commercial partnership, as well as to thwart the spread of communism to the Americas.<sup>20</sup> Twenty-one member states founded the organization, signing onto the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, or the "Rio Treaty," establishing a defensive military alliance in the region and commitment to representative democracy. Today, there are 35 members, every country in the hemisphere, and 70 permanent observers; however, Cuba was removed in 1962 and Venezuela has applied to leave.<sup>21</sup>

Also in South America, MERCOSUR was founded in 1991 as a trade bloc and customs union between Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela (currently suspended). This promoted trade

and economic activity between the South American countries, and Bolivia is now entering as a full member, with multiple other South American states as Associate members and Mexico as an observer.<sup>22</sup> MERCOSUR is currently looking to converge with the Pacific Alliance.

In North America, USMCA and NATO are the prominent regional bodies. USMCA was passed by President Trump in 2018 to replace NAFTA and connect the U.S. with Mexico and Canada in a free trade agreement with some regulations.<sup>23</sup> NATO joins the U.S. and Canada with western Europe in a collective security measure, aligning the interests of these countries through a military alliance. It was established in 1949 as a second step to follow the Marshall Plan, which provided recovery aid to facilitate the re-development and economic integration of western Europe, to now defend against the spread of Soviet communism across Europe from the east.<sup>24</sup> NATO has lasted well beyond the Cold War, with membership expanding to include even some former Soviet states across Eastern Europe and the Baltic.<sup>25</sup> Today, it is the largest peacetime military alliance currently in the world.<sup>26</sup>

On the other side, Europe is also deeply integrated via the EU as well as NATO. The EU was officially founded on November 1, 1993, though the idea and start of such cooperation began much earlier. Sparked by the desire to prevent another great war between European neighbors after World War I and World War II, the

<sup>20</sup> Lee, Brianna, and Danielle Runwick. *The Organization of American States*. Council on Foreign Relations, 11 Apr. 2018, [www.cfr.org/backgrounder/organization-american-states](http://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/organization-american-states).

<sup>21</sup> "Latin American Regional Organisations." *Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*, 2019, [www.cfr.org/backgrounder/organization-american-states](http://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/organization-american-states).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Applebaum, Anne. "Trump's New NAFTA Is Pretty Much the Same as the Old One - but at What Cost?" *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 1 Oct. 2018,

[www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/10/01/trumps-new-nafta-is-pretty-much-the-same-as-the-old-one-but-at-what-cost/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/10/01/trumps-new-nafta-is-pretty-much-the-same-as-the-old-one-but-at-what-cost/).

<sup>24</sup> Office of the Historian. "North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 1949." *U.S. Department of State*, [www.history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/nato](http://www.history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/nato).

<sup>25</sup> "Member Countries." *NATO*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 14 May 2019,

[www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_52044.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52044.htm).

<sup>26</sup> Office of the Historian, DOS.



European Coal and Steel Commission was founded in 1950 to create lasting political and economic ties between the six founding countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.<sup>27</sup> With the rise of the Cold War in the 1950s, and anti-Communist protests in Hungary put down by Soviet tanks in 1956, the Treaty of Rome established the European Economic Community, or “Common Market” in 1957, an anti-Communist bloc promoting free trade among member European states.<sup>28</sup> The Common Market removed customs duties and created shared trade and agriculture standards. Meanwhile, the ECSC added the UK, Ireland, and Denmark in 1973, created its first Parliament in 1979, and eventually expanded membership to Greece, then Spain and Portugal.<sup>29</sup>

Finally, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Maastricht Treaty of 1993 established the EU, soon adding Austria, Sweden, and Finland, then 12 more countries in 2004 (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia).<sup>30</sup>

Just south, Africa is primarily united via the African Union. The AU was founded in 2002 in Durban, South Africa, but its history extends beyond that date. The 32 states that were independent in Africa by May 25, 1963, formed the Organization for African Union (OAU), marking a significant development of their sovereignty and multilateral recognition following Europe’s

imperial period on the continent. Gradually, 21 more states joined, creating the African Union (AU) in 2002, based on the Abuja Treaty establishing an economic community in Africa in 1991, eventually adding its 54th member, South Sudan, in 2011, covering every country in Africa.<sup>31</sup> The AU’s primary objectives are to coordinate cooperation efforts among member states to create better lives for the people in Africa, protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of its members, end colonization and apartheid (created by European presence) on the continent, work within the UN international framework, and harmonize the members’ varying policies.<sup>32</sup>

ECOWAS is another prominent regional organization on the continent, covering the western African states of Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania (left in 2002), Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Burkina Faso (which joined as Upper Volta).<sup>33</sup> It was founded with the Treaty of Lagos in Nigeria during 1975, and added Cape Verde two years later in 1977.<sup>34</sup> The organization holds three official languages - English, French, and Portuguese - and its central purpose is to “promote economic trade, national cooperation, and monetary union, for growth and development throughout West Africa.”<sup>35</sup>

It also partakes in peacekeeping efforts, with its peacekeeping forces under the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group

<sup>27</sup> “The History of the European Union.” *European Union*, 23 May 2019, [europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/history\\_en](http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/history_en).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Amadeo, Kimberly. “How Europe Became an Economic Powerhouse.” *The Balance*, 4 July 2019, [www.thebalance.com/what-is-the-european-union-how-it-works-and-history-3306356](http://www.thebalance.com/what-is-the-european-union-how-it-works-and-history-3306356).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> “History: Africa Union.” *U.S. Agency for International Development*, USAID, 18 Jan. 2017, [www.usaid.gov/african-union/history](http://www.usaid.gov/african-union/history).

<sup>32</sup> “History: Africa Union.” *U.S. Agency for International Development*, USAID, 18 Jan. 2017, [www.usaid.gov/african-union/history](http://www.usaid.gov/african-union/history).

<sup>33</sup> Boddy-Evans, Alistair. “What Countries Are Members of ECOWAS?” *ThoughtCo*, 2 July 2019, [www.thoughtco.com/economic-community-west-african-states-ecowas-43900](http://www.thoughtco.com/economic-community-west-african-states-ecowas-43900).

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

(ECOMOG) arranged in times of need, such as during the devastating civil wars in Liberia (1990 – 1998), Sierra Leone (1991 – 2001), Guinea-Bissau (1998 – 1999), and Cote D'Ivoire (2002), throughout the region.<sup>36</sup> This shows ECOWAS's multifaceted approach towards promoting the well-being of its people, leading the organization to guide de-escalation, prevention, and management of crisis, and provide recovery assistance to post-conflict states.<sup>37</sup> It has been essential to defusing and mediating crises in Togo, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire and Gambia.<sup>38</sup> In addition to ECOWAS, the African Development Bank Group is an important player in promoting investment in its member countries and providing policy advice and assistance in implementing and supporting development efforts.<sup>39</sup>

The Middle East, halfway between Africa and Asia, is united by the League of Arab States. This organization was founded from the region's countries' meetings during the last two years of World War II to resist the European Mandate system, which was covering and occupying territory from Iraq and Syria to Lebanon and Palestine.<sup>40</sup> It was pushed by Iraq's foreign minister Nuri Said, the British Foreign Office, and Egypt by its desire to gain a larger foothold in the regional system.<sup>41</sup> With the Alexandria Protocol's blueprint for the league from the first inter-Arab meeting in 1944, the states of Syria, Transjordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia,

Lebanon, Egypt, and Yemen came together and established the Arab League in Cairo, Egypt, in March of 1945, shortly before the end of the war.<sup>42</sup>

It has since grown to include 22 Arab countries, including Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Sudan, Somalia, and the Comoros, which are all across Africa, altogether working to tighten the "close relations and numerous ties which bind the Arab States" and pursue "the welfare of all the Arab States" and the "realization of their aspirations."<sup>43</sup> Also in the region of North Africa, the Arab Maghreb Union was established by a treaty between Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, and Mauritania in 1989 to produce "sustainable development in all areas of human activities," such as linking the countries on common characteristics, promoting the rights, equity, and justice of their people, and facilitating the free movement of people, services and capital between them.<sup>44</sup>

Finally, in Asia, ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) was founded in 1967 by its 5 original members - Indonesia, Philippines, India, Malaysia and Singapore<sup>45</sup> - to promote regional peace and security while accelerating economic growth, social progress and cultural development.<sup>46</sup> ASEAN has been influential across Southeast Asia and much of the rest of the continent in terms of free trade, nuclear weapons, and relations with other

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> UN Security Council.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> African Development Bank. "Mission & Strategy." African Development Bank - Building today, a better Africa tomorrow. African Development Bank Group, July 10, 2018. <https://www.afdb.org/en/about/mission-strategy>.

<sup>40</sup> Pinfari, Marco. "Regional Organizations in the Middle East." *Oxford Handbooks*, 15 June 2017, [www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935307.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935307-e-86#oxfordhb-9780199935307-e-86-div2-2](http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935307.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935307-e-86#oxfordhb-9780199935307-e-86-div2-2).

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> UNECA. "AMU - Arab Maghreb Union." *United Nations Economic Commission for Africa*, 2016, [www.uneca.org/oria/pages/amu-arab-maghreb-union](http://www.uneca.org/oria/pages/amu-arab-maghreb-union).

<sup>45</sup> James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. "Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)." *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, 26 Mar. 2019, [www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/association-southeast-asian-nations-asean/](http://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/association-southeast-asian-nations-asean/).

<sup>46</sup> "Regional Organizations." *International Law | Globalization101*, 2012, [www.globalization101.org/regional-organizations/](http://www.globalization101.org/regional-organizations/).

regional organizations.<sup>47</sup> ASEAN's 10 current members are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, with Papua New Guinea as an observer.<sup>48</sup>

However, its influence extends far beyond just this group, through its connections with the trilateral framework of China, Japan and South Korea in ASEAN Plus Three (established in 1997), and combining them with Australia, New Zealand and India in the East Asian Summit in 2005, eventually adding in the U.S. and Russia in 2011.<sup>49</sup> Even more geographically broad in scope, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was founded in 1989 and connects the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Peru and Chile with all of the Asia-Pacific in order to end tariffs and establish free trade between its 21 member economies.<sup>50</sup> Meanwhile, in 1994, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was created to promote political and security consultation and cooperation across the Asia-Pacific, making it the only institutionalized forum for security-policy discussion in the region.<sup>51</sup> Its 27 member states include the 10 ASEAN countries, plus Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, the EU, India, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, North Korea, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Russian Federation, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste and the United States.<sup>52</sup> The ARF uses confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy between member states to quell any friendly conflicts from escalating, following multiple political accords by the group for regional stability,

cooperation, mutual respect, and the hindrance of nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia.<sup>53</sup>

Additionally, Asia features the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). SAARC was founded in 1985 by 7 South Asian states Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka - for economic and trade issues, including agriculture, rural development, the environment, forestry, human resources development and transport.<sup>54</sup> It established the South Asian Free Trade Association (SAFTA) and is an observer at the UN, as are ASEAN and the SCO.<sup>55</sup> The SCO is the 2001 offshoot of the 1996 "Shanghai 5," consisting of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan originally, and now including Uzbekistan as a member and many other south and central Asian states, including India, Mongolia, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Belarus and Afghanistan as observers or "dialogue partners."<sup>56</sup> It was initially designed for security cooperation in the member states' border regions but now includes solutions to economic and trade issues, counter-terrorism, energy security, and joint military maneuvers for regional stability.<sup>57</sup>

ASEM connects Europe and Asia, founded in 1996 for political, business, and cultural multilateral exchanges. It has 53 members consisting of the entire EU,

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> James Martin Center.

<sup>49</sup> Amt, Auswärtiges. "Regional Organisations in Asia." *German Federal Foreign Office*, [www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/regionaleschwerpunkte/asien/-/231346#content\\_2](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/regionaleschwerpunkte/asien/-/231346#content_2).

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> James Martin Center.

<sup>54</sup> Amt.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

Norway and Switzerland, all of ASEAN, and most of East and South Asia.<sup>58</sup>

## Contemporary Conditions

Although founded in the past, these regional organizations will be essential to possibly resolving some of today's most pressing conflicts. Many are observers at the UN and often join countries from across different blocs toward political and security cooperation, producing peace during instances of regional conflict. This committee will work to figure out how certain regional organizations can be utilized to resolve current pressing conflicts.

## *East and Southeast Asia - South China Sea*

The South China Sea is a hotspot for conflict in Southeast Asia. Multiple states have conflicting claims to the islands in the region as well as overlapping EEZs (Exclusive Economic Zones) due to the complex geography and territorial holdings in the region. China is worsening this issue by pursuing the building of artificial islands, on which it is installing military bases, and many countries across East and Southeast Asia see this as a threatening move of territorial expansion from the rising East Asian and world power.

Recent actions in the South China Sea such as China's building and militarization of artificial islands, new demonstrations of naval strength with Chinese fleet sailings, and its assertions of sovereignty over the entire sea have demonstrated China's expansive tendencies and the propensity for conflict in the region, both with the U.S. and with China's neighbors. Tensions have escalated as the U.S. has reciprocally asserted its freedom of navigation in the region and defended the area as international waters. The other claimants in the South China Sea, namely Vietnam, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Brunei, have fought for control of their territories and EEZs.

The South China Sea is located south of mainland China, in between Vietnam and the Philippines, and north of Malaysia and Indonesia. China claims the region historically, saying that the Mongol and Manchu empires that controlled far-reaching territories in the South China Sea and beyond were old Chinese empires,<sup>59</sup> and thus Chinese citizens have been fishing the

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Marston, Hunter. "More Trade Won't Stop China's Aggression." *The National Interest*, The Center for the National

Interest, 15 June 2016, [nationalinterest.org/feature/more-trade-wont-stop-chinas-aggression-16587?page=2](http://nationalinterest.org/feature/more-trade-wont-stop-chinas-aggression-16587?page=2).

sea since ancient times.<sup>60</sup> Specifically, they believe that Genghis Khan, the Mongol emperor, was Chinese, and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) of today is the “heir” to these imperialist regimes.<sup>61</sup>

As early as the 1970s, countries in the region began claiming sections of the sea and its islands, such as the Spratly Islands, which possess rich natural resources like oil and natural gas, and fishing areas.<sup>62</sup> In fact, the sea is estimated to have some 11 billion barrels of untapped oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, highly important resources for countries to access.<sup>63</sup>

The issue is much more complex today due not only to countries’ conflicting territorial claims, but also to their claims to EEZs, which provide economic sovereignty over a much greater expanse of maritime area. According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which established the concept of an EEZ in 1982, a coastal states’ physical territory extends up to 12 nautical miles off their coastline, while their EEZ, where they hold jurisdiction over the exploration and extraction of marine resources from the water and underlying seabed, extends no more than 200 nautical miles (as far as its adjacent continental shelf).<sup>64</sup> Here, a country can exercise sovereign rights, exclusive fishery and resource management, oil drilling,<sup>65</sup> environmental conservation, harnessing of energy from water currents or winds above, marine science research and the building of artificial islands and

installations or structures; but, each must allow for the freedom of navigation of any other state, coastal or land-locked, including the passing of their ships, laying of pipelines and submarine cables, and flyovers by aircraft.<sup>66</sup>

China has manipulated this concept of international law for their own territorial expansion in the South China Sea. Vietnam and the Philippines are geographically much closer to the South China Sea than China, and Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia are all geographically closer to some of the hotly contested islands, such as the Spratly Islands, than is China. However, China has also conducted a series of naval maneuvers and exercises, sailing their ships through disputed waters and setting up military and industrial outposts on islands they’ve built in such disputed waters, heightening the conflict, especially with the U.S. and their Southeast Asian neighbors.<sup>67</sup>

Although the conflict began much earlier, China has berated Vietnamese, Indonesian, and Philippine ships in their own territorial waters in the South China Sea since 2016, and it also has executed multiple low fly-bys at U.S. ships and surveillance planes in the region’s international waters, going against UNCLOS international law.<sup>68</sup> In 2017, China declared war on the U.S. and explained the inevitability of a crash course following the U.S.’s continually unilateral stance, such as Trump’s defense and blockade of islands in the South China Sea that China claims belong to them, spurring

<sup>60</sup> Malik, Mohan. “Historical Fiction: China’s South China Sea Claims.” *World Affairs Journal*, June 2013.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Blackwill, Robert D, et al. “Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea | Global Conflict Tracker.” *Council on Foreign Relations*, 22 Nov. 2019, [www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/territorial-disputes-south-china-sea](http://www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/territorial-disputes-south-china-sea).

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> OECD Statistics Directorate. “Exclusive Economic Zone.” *OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms*, 4 Mar. 2003, [stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=884](http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=884). (citing Glossary of

Environment Statistics, Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 67, United Nations, New York, 1997.)

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> UNCLOS. “Part V - Exclusive Economic Zone”, 1982, Articles 55-75, United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, accessed at [https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention\\_agreements/texts/unclos/part5.htm](https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/part5.htm).

<sup>67</sup> Blackwill.

<sup>68</sup> Marston.



their interpretations of Trump's actions as U.S. acts of war and preparing the PLA military in response.<sup>69</sup>

The U.S. has increased its demonstrations of the UNCLOS-granted right to freedom of navigation even in other countries' EEZs, sending military and naval ships through the waters to demonstrate free and open passage for any countries' ships and trade.<sup>70</sup> While China argues that foreign militaries cannot perform military intelligence operations, such as reconnaissance flights, in its EEZ, the U.S. argues on the side of UNCLOS that countries should have freedom of navigation through the EEZs of other countries in the sea and don't have to inform them of military activities there.<sup>71</sup>

China has physically increased the size of islands and made new ones altogether, including by pouring sand on existing coral reefs, to reclaim land in the South China Sea and build ports, airstrips and bases on its sand-filled islands.<sup>72</sup> It claims sovereignty over 80% of the entire sea including both the Spratly Islands and Paracel Islands, which are also both claimed by Vietnam, and has even built a city on Woody Island, increasing Chinese tourism to the region.<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile, the Philippines also asserts ownership over the Spratly Islands as well as Scarborough Shoal, and Brunei and Malaysia have overlapping claims in the southern part of the sea including part of the Spratly Islands.<sup>74</sup> Each country has attempted to seize control of

different rocks, islands and even low-tide features jutting above the water in order to stake their claims, further heightening the conflict in the sea.<sup>75</sup>

The U.S. has conducted military freedom of navigation operations (FONOPS), primarily against expansive Chinese claims (some reaching 2,000 kilometers from its shoreline and near the coasts of Indonesia and Malaysia),<sup>76</sup> as well as bolstering support for its Southeast Asian partners.<sup>77</sup> These actions have demonstrably angered the Chinese administration, spurring heightened aggression and a cycle of retaliation, which could potentially spin out of control, especially after Trump's late 2019 FONOPS.<sup>78</sup>

China believes the U.S. is trying to irk conflict and trouble in the region with these maneuvers and argues that their military is there to stay, but that the U.S. risks "unexpected incidents" if they continue their actions.<sup>79</sup> Most important to the U.S. are the key shipping lanes, called sea lines of communication (SLOCs), for trade through the region (40% of the world's liquified natural gas, or LNG, passes through the sea annually,<sup>80</sup> as well as \$3.4 trillion of trade and 80% of China's oil imports), and key reserves of strategic resources, such as massive oil and natural gas deposits, and 10% of the world's fisheries, key to feed hundreds of millions of people.<sup>81</sup>

The U.S. has major defense commitments in East Asia that could drag them into conflict with China if a dispute

<sup>69</sup> Worley, Will. "Chinese Military Says War with US 'Becoming Practical Reality'." *The Independent*, Independent Digital News and Media, 30 Jan. 2017, [www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/china-donald-trump-war-us-military-official-practical-reality-president-latest-a7550601.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/china-donald-trump-war-us-military-official-practical-reality-president-latest-a7550601.html).

<sup>70</sup> Blackwill.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> "South China Sea Dispute." *South China Morning Post*, 16 Feb. 2019, [www.scmp.com/week-asia/article/2186449/explained-south-china-sea-dispute](http://www.scmp.com/week-asia/article/2186449/explained-south-china-sea-dispute).

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Blackwill.

<sup>78</sup> O'Connor, Tom. "China Sends Military toward U.S. Navy Challenge at Sea as Their Ties Are Put to the Test." *Newsweek*, 22 Nov. 2019, [www.newsweek.com/china-send-military-us-challenge-sea-1473552](http://www.newsweek.com/china-send-military-us-challenge-sea-1473552).

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Blackwill.

<sup>81</sup> "South China Sea Dispute."

escalates. Washington's defense treaty with the Philippines could cause a China-Philippines conflict over natural gas deposits and lucrative fishing grounds to escalate more broadly.<sup>82</sup> Other allies may be drawn in, such as ASEAN or the UK and France, which have also both conducted FONOPs, and the potential for mass deaths and larger weapons with greater military conflict, especially as the U.S. and China have large forces prepared in and around the sea.

### *Latin American Instability - Venezuela, Colombia and Mexico*

The crisis in Venezuela today consists of a political standoff between current president Nicolas Maduro's administration and the opposition government led by Juan Guaidó, forcing the Venezuelan military to now pick sides and creating a power vacuum in the once oil-rich Latin American state and resulting hyper-inflation, loss of government services, and flocks of refugees leaving the country.<sup>83</sup> The international community will be paramount to settling this conflict, providing basic resources to the Venezuelan people while supporting a stable and representative government, and aiding Venezuelan refugees.

The conflict began with Hugo Chavez's rise to power in Venezuela in 1998 on a socialist platform, using Venezuela's extensive oil reserves - the largest in the world - to provide subsidized goods and services to the Venezuelan people.<sup>84</sup> However, because of his long duration of corruption and economic mismanagement,

Venezuela became almost completely dependent on its oil exports for its economy, leaving it susceptible to a crash of oil prices in 2014 which wrecked its economy.<sup>85</sup> Nicolas Maduro, who'd assumed the presidency after being vice president in the former administration until Chavez's death in 2013, was subsequently elected and began printing money to resolve the crisis.<sup>86</sup> This caused rampant inflation, leading to unaffordable basic goods and services, such as groceries, produce, and electricity. Massive anti-government protests broke out across the country in 2014, eventually leading to the election of the first opposition-majority National Assembly (Congress) in 2015 after two decades of Chavez domination.<sup>87</sup> The IMF estimates that hyperinflation hit 10 million percent in 2019.<sup>88</sup>

## **Past United Nations and International Actions**

### *South China Sea*

The most important UN action in relation to the South China Sea is the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), beginning in 1956 with UNCLOS I (published in 1958) and continuing for decades until UNCLOS III in 1982. UNCLOS III became effective by 1984, settling varying claims to territorial waters with 6 parts, including countries' EEZs. While 60 countries originally signed on,<sup>89</sup> that number is now up to 167, with the U.S., Peru, Venezuela and Turkey among notable holdouts.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Blackwill.

<sup>83</sup> "Instability in Venezuela." *Council on Foreign Relations | Global Conflict Tracker*, CFR, 22 Nov. 2019,

[www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/instability-venezuela](http://www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/instability-venezuela).

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> "The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (A historical perspective)". Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations, 1999.

<sup>90</sup> "United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea". United Nations Treaty Series.

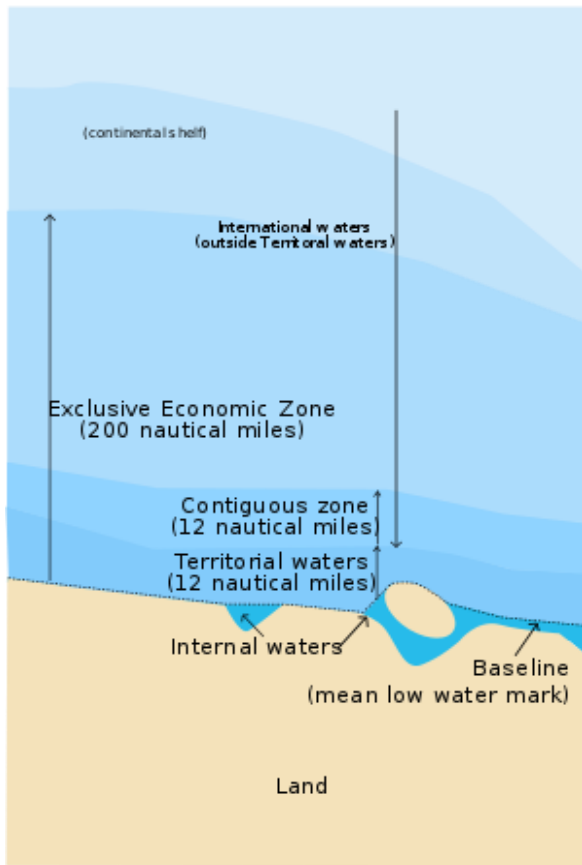


Figure 1: Territorial waters and related information<sup>91</sup>

The Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which gave birth to the resolution seen in the image above, began work with the Seabed Committee, established in UNCLOS I, in 1968 and worked for 9 years before publishing UNCLOS III.<sup>92</sup> It still encourages and guides the development and eventual adoption of the Law of the Sea Convention by states today.<sup>93</sup>

In 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague ruled against China and in favor of the Philippines in almost every count. Although China is a signatory of the UNCLOS treaty that established the tribunal (and the U.S. isn't), their roles are flipped when it comes to

recognizing the international court's ruling on the issue.<sup>94</sup> Also, ASEAN has been working with China on an official code of conduct for avoiding clashes in the disputed waters, and a binding agreement has been discussed though not completed.<sup>95</sup>

While ASEAN has been the primary actor to try to work with China for a resolution in the South China Sea, Vietnam and the Philippines have both attempted bilateral international cooperation with China to calm tensions. The Philippines' Rodrigo Duterte agreed to bilateral talks with Xi Jinping to attempt to solve their dispute, and Vietnam has softened its once-highly critical stance on China and announced their willingness to bilaterally work with China "in accordance with international law."<sup>96</sup>

According to the Council on Foreign Relations, "The failure of Chinese and Southeast Asian leaders to resolve the disputes by diplomatic means could also undermine international laws governing maritime disputes and encourage destabilizing arms buildups."<sup>97</sup> The U.S. supports a binding and internationally agreed upon code of conduct and confidence-building measures (CBMs) in order to hopefully alleviate the spiraling of existing tensions.<sup>98</sup>

### *Venezuela and Mexico*

The OAS was designed with some similar institutional features to the EU, but has also chosen not to integrate their political and economic systems as closely as the EU. While there is an Inter-American Court of Human Rights, an Inter-American Development Bank, and a Permanent Council, the OAS has not been given as

<sup>91</sup> "Territorial Waters." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, November 10, 2019.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Territorial\\_waters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Territorial_waters).

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Blackwill.

<sup>95</sup> "South China Sea Dispute."

<sup>96</sup> Blackwill.

<sup>97</sup> Blackwill.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

much authority over domestic policy as the EU member states have vested in the EU.<sup>99</sup>

However, these branches of the overarching regional organization can provide some framework for how the countries can work together multilaterally for a solution. For example, 24 countries from across Latin America and the Caribbean met in April of 2018 for a summit supported by ECLAC to produce a historic environmental agreement. The fundamentally democratic nature of this agreement via unprecedented participation of elected representatives of civil society demonstrates the possibility of regional cooperation to accomplish tangible and meaningful goals, especially in the South and Central American region.<sup>100</sup>

On the Venezuela issue, 14 neighboring Latin American countries called out the 2018 re-election of President Nicolas Maduro as fraudulent and formed the Lima Group, supporting Juan Guaidó, the interim president, as the legitimate leader of Venezuela.<sup>101</sup> The U.S., Canada, EU, and much of the OAS also recognized Guaidó as interim president in early 2019 until free and fair elections are held.<sup>102</sup> On the other hand, powerful countries such as

Russia, China, Cuba and Turkey support the Maduro administration.<sup>103</sup> While the U.S. has recently increased sanctions on the Maduro government, especially on oil exports to Cuba, Cuba has provided vital military and intelligence support to Maduro to keep him in power, and Russia has even provided troops since March 2019 and helped evade oil sanctions.<sup>104</sup> China, also, has supported Maduro and helped rebuild the national power grid.

Amid the political standoff in the country, sanctions, divides and refugee flows have increased drastically, creating a humanitarian crisis. Thousands of Venezuelans are fleeing the country by foot each day,<sup>105</sup> and the Maduro, however, rejects aid from the U.S., calling it a political ploy designed against him

<sup>99</sup> "Regional Organizations."

<sup>100</sup> "Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean Are Called On to Ratify the First Regional Agreement on Environmental Matters." *Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean*, ECLAC, 18 Apr. 2018, [www.cepal.org/en/news/countries-latin-america-and-caribbean-are-called-ratify-first-regional-agreement-environmental](http://www.cepal.org/en/news/countries-latin-america-and-caribbean-are-called-ratify-first-regional-agreement-environmental).

<sup>101</sup> "Instability in Venezuela."

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

## Questions a Resolution Must Address

1. *How can we properly address the causal conflicts without removing a nation's autonomy or taking away the rights of the citizens?*

In attempting to mitigate civil conflicts such as those in Syria, Israel, and Northern Africa, the United Nations and other individual countries must be wary of a nation's own sovereignty and supreme jurisdiction. Though these issues must be addressed, there is a fine line between aiding in conflict resolution and infringing on a state's sovereignty.

2. *Considering that many of the routes for crossing the Mediterranean are through illegal means and bolster illegal industries, how could we ensure that there are safe and legal ways for migrants to cross the Mediterranean?*

As the flow of migration across the Mediterranean is constant, it's of the utmost importance to guarantee the safety of the migrants. In order to increase safety and legality it's also imperative that this travel is regulated and does not perpetrate smuggling or human trafficking as it has in areas such as North Africa and around Turkey.

3. *Should there be an international policy on refugee and migrant acceptance? If so how can nations still remain sovereign and control their borders, and if not, how can we guarantee the rights of said migrants?*

Though the United Nations as an institution was created with the intent to implement international policy, many nations have different views on how to address this issue based on their own domestic standing. Ultimately, this question will form the basis of your resolution to this issue.

4. *How can we address domestic conflict that results from migrant/refugee policies?*

In order to properly mitigate the migration crisis, we must focus on the root of the problem: domestic conflicts. Though the conflicts are widespread and varied, it is your job to analyze your countries' position on the major aforementioned conflicts and address them accordingly.

5. *What is the role of the United Nations and the individual nations in humanitarian aid for these causal conflicts and for the migrants in other countries?*

Humanitarian efforts have ameliorated the migration crisis immensely, and should be considered an integral part in helping solve this crisis. It is necessary, however, to look at the extent of humanitarian aid, the type of humanitarian aid, and the host nations' role in humanitarian aid.



*6. Considering the past resolutions and policies created by the United Nations and the European Union, how will your solution to this problem differ and address the shortcomings of these past attempts?*

Migration in the Mediterranean is in no way a new topic on the international stage. In order to create a potentially better solution, we must also understand the historical context of former resolutions and policies and how they can be improved or their ideas expanded.

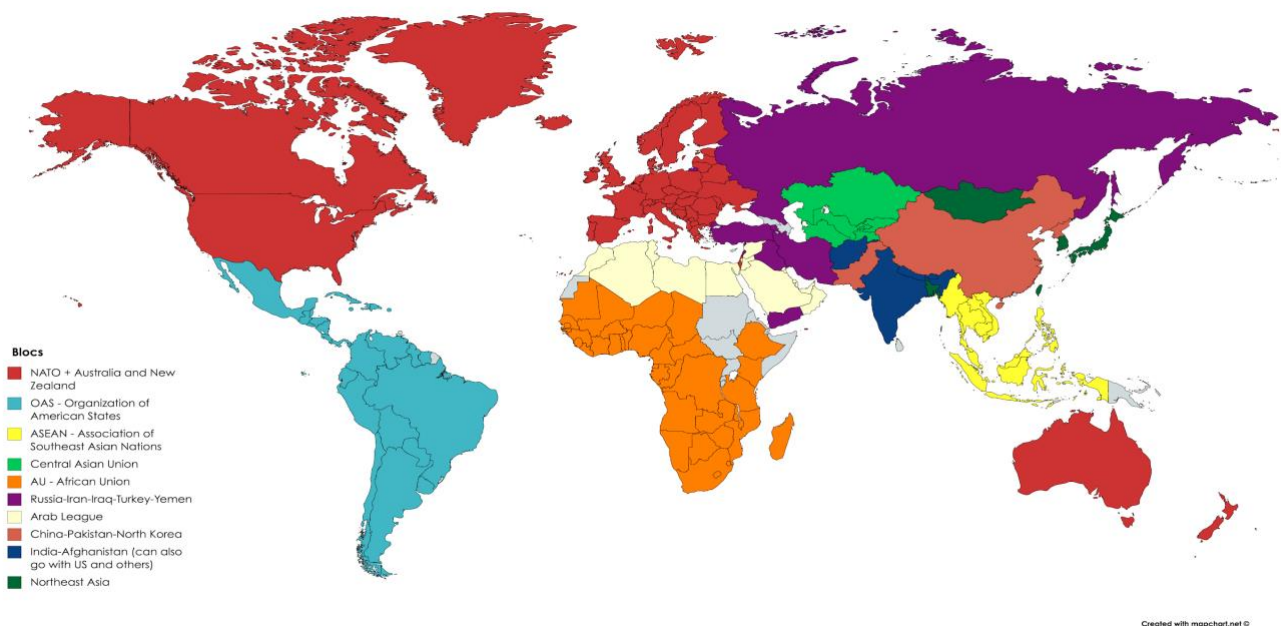
*7. For nations such as Greece, Turkey, Jordan, Italy, and Lebanon who are overrun by refugees and migrants, what steps should be taken to alleviate their economic strain without resorting to refoulement?*

As previously discussed, refoulement is prohibited under international law and should be avoided. These mentioned nations, however, often have legitimate economic backing to their refoulement policies that should be addressed.

*8. Once migrants and refugees reach a nation, how can they be assimilated into the culture so as to prevent domestic disputes?*

Many nations harbor ill sentiments towards refugees or migrants because of their inability to assimilate into their host-countries' culture. In Europe, there's been a rise in alt-right political movements vying to bar migrants and refugees from entering to preserve their culture. In order to prevent these types of extreme political actions, it is necessary to provide pathways for migrants to integrate into their host-country's society.

# Bloc Positions



- *NATO + Australia and New Zealand*  
Fundamentally, NATO is a political and military alliance between Western European countries, Canada and the United States. Member countries exchange information and develop means to combat current and future threats.<sup>106</sup> NATO works with countries across the globe, including Australia and New Zealand, to develop similar security structures to members of the alliance.<sup>107</sup>

- *Organization of American States (OAS)*  
OAS is comprised of every sovereign state in North and South America and the Caribbean with the primary goal of promoting peace, security and solidarity of all its members. OAS has also granted

observer status to 69 different states abroad, including the European Union.<sup>108</sup>

- *Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)*  
ASEAN is a regional community focused on economic, scientific and cultural collaboration. To promote this cross-country collaboration, all members states signed a treaty in 1976 outlining the fundamental principles an ASEAN member state should follow.<sup>109</sup> Agreements passed among ASEAN member states are considered binding and must be adhered to.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>106</sup> "NATO / OTAN." What is NATO? Accessed November 30, 2019. <https://www.nato.int/nato-welcome/index.html>.  
<sup>107</sup> NATO. "Partners." NATO Organization. NATO, September 25, 2019. <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/51288.htm>.  
<sup>108</sup> OAS. "Who We Are." OAS, August 1, 2009. [http://www.oas.org/en/about/who\\_we\\_are.asp](http://www.oas.org/en/about/who_we_are.asp).

<sup>109</sup> "About ASEAN - ASEAN: ONE VISION ONE IDENTITY ONE COMMUNITY." About ASEAN. ASEAN. Accessed November 30, 2019. <https://asean.org/asean/about-asean/>.  
<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

### ▪ *Central Asian Union*

These countries, also known as “the ‘Stans,” carry similar governing structures and may provide a unified regional force in response to the conflicts presented. Some notable dynamics, however, are recent security and economic cooperation between China and Kazakhstan, potentially influencing their stance on the South China Sea

### ▪ *African Union*

The African Union comprises every single country in Africa, but current crises including Sudan and South Sudan, Eritrean governance, and Somalian insurgency call the ability of every country in Africa to join this bloc, as well as the connection of Northern Africa to the Middle East in the League of Arab States.

### ▪ *Arab League*

The Arab League, or League of Arab States, spans North Africa and the Middle East, excluding Iran, Iraq, Israel, and Yemen. Originally founded in 1945 to discuss issues regarding postwar decolonization, the Arab League has grown to focus on all problems facing its member countries including economic, cultural and security concerns.<sup>111</sup> North African countries such as Libya, Tunisia, and Algeria are some of the major actors in the migration crisis and call on other countries and blocs to help find an expedient solution.

### ▪ *Russia-Iran-Turkey-Yemen-Iraq*

Trilateral relations between Russia, Iran, and Turkey have been forming,<sup>112</sup> and Yemen and Iraq have both been aligned with Iran and subsequently Russia as of recently. Turkey makes the dynamic more complicated, as it has similar interests with Russia and Iran on some issues, such as Syria’s Civil War in maintaining the Assad regime, but is also a member of NATO with the U.S. and a major trading partner of the EU.<sup>113</sup> Russia and China have also seen heightening cooperation and alliance building, providing a strong multilateral front on many key issues, which could be influential in the South China Sea or even Latin America

### ▪ *India and Afghanistan*

Historically, India and Afghanistan have enjoyed close bilateral ties. After the overthrow of the Taliban government, India was the largest regional provider of humanitarian aid.<sup>114</sup> More recently, these countries have worked together to contain Pakistan and stop the rise of Islamist militant-sponsored terrorist attacks from Pakistan, especially in the Kashmir region.

<sup>111</sup> Masters, Jonathan, and Mohammed Aly Sergie. “The Arab League.” Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, October 21, 2014.

<https://www.cfr.org/background/arab-league>.

<sup>112</sup> <https://ahvalnews.com/turkey-russia-iran/emerging-alliance-turkey-russia-and-iran-analyst>

<sup>113</sup>

[https://www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication\\_series/not](https://www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication_series/not)

[es\\_internacionales/n1\\_196/russia\\_iran\\_and\\_turkey\\_a\\_common\\_strategy\\_in\\_syria](https://www.cfr.org/publication/14969/es_internacionales/n1_196/russia_iran_and_turkey_a_common_strategy_in_syria)

<sup>114</sup> Bajoria, Jayshree. “India’s Northern Exposure.” Council on Foreign Relations, December 5, 2007.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20080530083317/http://www.cfr.org/publication/14969/>.

▪ *China-Pakistan and North Korea*

China and Pakistan have strengthened relations, especially in their conflict against India in the Kashmir region, and China and North Korea maintain neighborly relations, such as bilateral trade and political support from China, despite threats from the U.S.

▪ *Northeast Asia and allies*

Japan and South Korea, two democratic countries in Northeast Asia both with strong alliances with the U.S. as capitalist, democratic outposts in the region (including during the Cold War era), have held strong relations for some time. They also maintain close ties with Mongolia and even Bangladesh, which also carry ties with the U.S. and other similar democratic countries

## Conclusion

Today's conflicts have proven to be complicated and multidimensional, often of international concern and effect despite simply their geographical scope. For this reason, cooperation through and between regional organizations will be essential for resolving these disputes and promoting peace.

For the South China Sea, continuing ASEAN's negotiation of a binding code of conduct with China to resolve disputes will be crucial to finalizing an effective and peaceful agreement in the region. Beyond this, the ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum), East Asian Summit (ASEAN plus China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, India, Russia, and the U.S.), and ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) will be crucial to peaceful resolution of conflicting territorial and sovereignty claims. Working through these organizations with guidance by the UN's implemented Law of the Sea Convention will provide a framework for universal standards to be held across countries with claims in the region and therefore conflict settlement through consensus and cooperation between the different players. Also, combination of these organizations with other regional bodies will provide key international fronts to promote peace. For example, ASEM incorporates much of Europe and the Americas into the decision-making process with regards to the Asia-Pacific and specifically the South China Sea. Working with the GCC, especially for trade, could resolve much of the conflict in the South China Sea centered on claims for access to oil resources and drilling, such as at the hotly contested Spratly Islands. Therefore, exchanges between the GCC and APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) could provide oil flows to alleviate the dispute.

Also, the ARF working with the Arab League could incorporate the Muslim world into the peace-making process, especially as Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim country and lies right in the South China Sea contest. The resolutions produced on this conflict are extremely relevant to Africa to, with their competing maritime claims, which were a significant cause for the original UNCLOS back in the 1950s.

In terms of the Latin American drug wars, the OAS, MERCOSUR, and the USMCA will be key regional organizations to establish cooperation between the Americas, especially on trade, democracy, and security. Further cooperation with the EU or NATO, as well as other regional organizations and blocs from around the world can provide the necessary international front to counter these cartels, resolve instability in Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico and more, and provide sturdy economic cooperation and political support as well. Like with the South China Sea conflict, oil resources at risk in Venezuela and Mexico can be alleviated by exchanges with the GCC, ECOWAS, and other oil rich nations, and trade with ASEAN and beyond can provide economic stability. The U.S. and European countries through NATO and others will likely be sources of political support and governance models to these nations facing corruption and cartel control.



It is up to you, the delegates, to decide what these regional organizations must do and how. As you continue with your research on these conflicts and the regional organizations, you will find important regional treaties, national policies, or even UN resolutions that depict your country's stance on these issues or cooperation with the other members, and precedents that can be used from other resolutions. Use past United Nations resolutions, your country's own policies, previous regional treaties and historical resources to craft your position paper and subsequent resolution. With the proper research, I am fully confident that as a group we will be able to have substantial and engaging debate over one of today's most prevalent and serious international issues.



## Topic B:

### *Re-Evaluating the UN Support Mission in Libya*

## Introduction

Topic B, Re-Evaluating the UN Support Mission in Libya, comes at a critical point where the country of Libya is at risk of permanently splitting in two. The crisis in Libya is a story of battling government factions and militias for political and territorial control of the country, amid external actors seeking to divide the country. Currently, the UN Security Council has recognized the risk of the civil war's rapid proliferation of weapons and potentially devastating humanitarian catastrophe.<sup>115</sup>

After the overthrow of dictator Muammar al-Qaddafi (also known as Gaddafi) in 2011 during the Arab Spring, the democratic wave that swept through the Middle East and North Africa at the time, Libya's newly elected General National Congress (GNC) gained authority from the previous transitional government, but was then faced with multiple challengers and challengers.<sup>116</sup> In September of 2012, they faced an Islamist militant attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, and had to deal with the spread of the Islamic State (IS) and other militant groups across the country.<sup>117</sup> The battle for the government consists of militant extremist groups, the UN-supported Government of National Accord (GNA) in the east, based in the capitol Tripoli and

headed by the Presidency Council with prime minister Faiez al-Serraj, and its rival group, the House of Representatives, led by the commander of the Libyan National Army (LNA), General Khalifa Haftar, who was a Gaddafi-Loyalist and is based in Tobruk, Libya, with control over the eastern and southern parts of the country.<sup>118</sup>

Before the UN-supported government in western Libya took foot, Libya was largely divided between Islamist militant control in the west, centered in Tripoli where the General National Congress was, and the LNA led by Haftar in the east. In May of 2014, General Haftar launched Operation Dignity with the LNA to attack Islamist militant groups in the country, especially those across eastern Libya, including Benghazi. The Islamist groups, in return, consolidated into the Libya Dawn coalition, based in Tripoli.<sup>119</sup> Soon, a civil war broke out between the Libya Dawn coalition in the west and the Operation Dignity coalition in the east, with each side creating its own institutions and naming military leaders of their respective armed forces, as well as both facing internal divisions on tribal, regional, political, and religious lines.

This situation encouraged the UN Support Mission in Libya to intervene to stabilize the conflict and create a unity

<sup>115</sup> "Libya on Brink of Permanent Split, Top United Nations Man Tells Security Council, as African Union Official Calls Country 'Proxy Battleground' for External Actors | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." *United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*, United Nations, 21 May 2019, [www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13816.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13816.doc.htm).

<sup>116</sup> "Civil War in Libya." *CFR Global Conflict Tracker*, Council on Foreign Relations, 8 Nov. 2019, [www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/civil-war-libya](http://www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/civil-war-libya).

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> "Libya Stands at a 'Critical Juncture', UN Mission Head Tells Security Council." *UN News*, United Nations, 20 Mar. 2019, [news.un.org/en/story/2019/03/1035041](http://news.un.org/en/story/2019/03/1035041).

<sup>119</sup> "Civil War in Libya."

government. In 2011, Libya called on the UN for such a mission to aid its transition to democracy after the fall of former dictator Muammar Gaddafi in the Arab Spring.<sup>120</sup> With the UN Special Envoy to Libya facilitating rounds of talks, they created the Libyan Political Agreement and the GNA.<sup>121</sup> However, the GNA has continued to face obstacles and difficulty in creating a stable, unified government in Libya. Armed Islamist groups such as Ansar al-Sharia and IS have exploited the political instability in the country as a center to create broader regional violence, with their own bombings and attacks throughout Libya, especially in its cities such as Derna and Benghazi.<sup>122</sup> Even though Haftar announced in 2018 that the LNA has recently recaptured the last IS outpost in Derna, the Islamic State has continued to operate throughout the country, including with an attack on Libya's foreign ministry in December, 2018.<sup>123</sup>

Meanwhile, Libya has had to confront another crisis, the large-scale flow of migrants, irregularly and illegally, into the country as their gateway to Europe from other African countries in unrest.<sup>124</sup> This flow has vastly affected their economy and society, draining resources and providing an easy target for terrorist organizations to further exploit the situation.<sup>125</sup> The international silence on this issue has left them in an unsteady state, further exacerbating the already ongoing political instability and human catastrophe.

Libya has come to a "critical juncture," according to the UNSMIL head Ghassan Salamé, where the future of the

state relies on the outcome of the UNSMIL and any potential reforms to it.<sup>126</sup> Because of opposition forces' fighting against Haftar and the LNA's stabilization efforts in the south and west of the country, civilians have faced increasing casualties and human rights abuses.<sup>127</sup> Infrastructure is declining rapidly as basic services are eroding and even water production is "particularly fragile."<sup>128</sup>

The UN implemented its Humanitarian Response Plan for 2019 with account of the 823,000 people, including migrants and 248,000 children, in need of humanitarian aid, devoting \$202 million to the cause. Meanwhile, the UNSMIL held another series of talks two months after, in April, to officially bring the two sides together in hopes of ending their eight year split and preventing the escalation of recent tensions while pivoting towards stability and a political compact to finally end the country's crisis.<sup>129</sup> The talks were disrupted by a seeming attempt at a coup by Haftar, extending the political disarray.<sup>130</sup> The UAE has supported Haftar's rival regime, demonstrating the outside forces perpetuating the crisis within Libya, with broader consequences for its people, the region and even the world.<sup>131</sup>

Now, as the UN voted to renew the mandate of the UNSMIL by 12 months this past September, it's necessary to review the success or development of the mission before its next annual UN vote for renewal.<sup>132</sup> The most recent resolution on the UNSMIL called for progress toward a ceasefire for security as well as meaningful

<sup>120</sup> Yunglun.

<sup>121</sup> "Civil War in Libya."

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> UN Affairs. "Libya Facing 'Serious Crisis' Fueled by Outsiders Bent on Dividing the County, UN Assembly Told | UN News."

*UN News*, United Nations, 25 Sept. 2019, [news.un.org/en/story/2019/09/1047592](https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/09/1047592).

<sup>125</sup> Ibid

<sup>126</sup> "Libya Stands at a 'Critical Juncture!'"

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> UN Affairs.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Yunglun.

economic dialogue and an inclusive political process.<sup>133</sup> Because of serious recent concerns of the possibility of a full-scale civil war breaking out in Libya, Ghassan Salamé, the UN special representative on Libya to Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, argued that the most recent mandate of the UNSMIL should focus on creating a ceasefire based on any sort of truce or agreement between the two sides in the conflict.<sup>134</sup>

Our committee will focus on whether the UNSMIL is focusing on the right aspects for the peace, security, and well-being of Libya and the people affected by the conflict. Are there programs that the UNSMIL is overlooking? Should it focus more on one part of its mission rather than the others? Is the UNSMIL designed correctly now but needs a strengthening of resources or support? This committee will hopefully come up with resolutions for what needs to be done in terms of the UN Support Mission in Libya for 2020.

## Historical Background

This section will discuss the history of the Libyan crisis as well as that of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). Beginning in 2011, the Libyan Revolution broke out. This revolution was an armed conflict between Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's forces and those attempting to overthrow his government. Gaddafi was the head of the Free Officers (a group of Arab nationalists) until 1977, and then claimed to be a "symbolic figurehead" until 2011. Under Gaddafi's ceremonial position, Libya existed as a direct democracy state.<sup>135</sup> In reality, Gaddafi placed relatives and

members of his tribe in vital government and military positions to maintain power. During his 42-year rule, Gaddafi controlled a large share of business enterprises while the state suffered under high unemployment rates, poor infrastructure.<sup>136</sup> In response to housing issues and political corruption, in January of 2011, protestors in Bayda, Derna, Benghazi and other cities broke into and occupied government housing.<sup>137</sup> The government responded with an investment fund to provide housing and development, but this was not enough. In late January, political activists took to the internet and social media to organize protests.

In early February, a day of protest was declared on the Internet to take place on February 17th. In response to this proposed "Day of Rage", organized by the National Conference for the Libyan Opposition, police met protestors in Benghazi with live ammunition.<sup>138</sup> As the protests spread to Tripoli, more than 200 people were killed.<sup>139</sup> The United Nation's involvement in the uprising began 5 days after this first large demonstration, on February 21st. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon held talks with Gaddafi and demanded that he address the conflict immediately. In response, Gaddafi blamed the protests on al Qaeda, and suggested that the protestors were being manipulated by outside parties.<sup>140</sup> Gaddafi also stated that he would rather die a martyr than step down from his position of power.

US President Obama responded to these claims by freezing Gaddafi's assets, which was followed up the UN Security

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Robbins, James (7 March 2007). "Eyewitness: Dialogue in the desert". BBC News. Retrieved 22 October 2011.

<sup>136</sup> Azad, Sher (22 October 2011). "Gaddafi and the media". *The Daily News*. Archived from the original on 25 October 2011. Retrieved 22 October 2011.

<sup>137</sup> "Libyans Protest over Delayed Subsidized Housing Units". *Almasry Alyoum*. 16 January 2011.

<sup>138</sup> "Anti-Government Protesters Killed in Libyan Clash". *USA Today*. Associated Press. 17 February 2011.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid

<sup>140</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2013/09/20/world/libya-civil-war-fast-facts/index.html>

Council's decision to impose sanctions against Libya. In addition to freezing his assets and an arms embargo, the UNSC referred Gaddafi to the International Criminal Court for his humanitarian crimes.<sup>141</sup>

In March 2011, French, British, and American military forces sought to enforce a no-fly zone imposed by the UNSC, sparking the direct international response to the conflict. NATO later announces that it has overtaken full control of air operations to protect civilians under a campaign titled Operation United Protector.<sup>142</sup>

NATO's involvement was controversial, seen by other international leaders as purely militaristic and lacking the UN resolutions meant to protect civilians and assassinate Gaddafi.<sup>143</sup> Thus, in August 2011 an agreement is reached in the UNSC to release \$1.5 billion in frozen assets to Libya's rebel government.<sup>144</sup> By October, Gaddafi is killed after being captured by rebel forces.

After NATO's operation, Libya fell into a period of instability. Although Gaddafi was successfully overthrown, no stable government was formed after the mission. A rebel leadership known as the National Transitional Council took control. In an effort to assist the National Transitional Council, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) was established with the goal of restoring public security, creating political dialogue, protecting human rights, initiating economic recovery and coordinating support with multilateral actors.<sup>145</sup>

Although the UNSMIL was in place, the democratic election in 2012 elected the

Generation National Congress (GNC) into power. Under the GNC, sharia law was imposed and general democratic elections were postponed, causing dissent towards the GNC. In 2014, Khalifa Haftar created the president's council to organize free elections and, in May 2012, he led Operation Dignity, a militia offensive to seize control of Tripoli.<sup>146</sup>

By 2014, elections were held for the new legislative body, hopefully bringing moderate and liberal groups to the Libyan House of Representatives. But due to low election turnouts, Islamist groups rejected the results and began attacks on major cities, eventually taking control of Misrata, later titled Operation Libya Dawn. The Libyan House of Representatives relocated from Tripoli to Tobruk. A renewed civil war broke out.<sup>147</sup>

In 2015, the UN began to facilitate talks between factions in hopes of establishing a unity government to bring an end to the civil war. After much resistance, a peace agreement was eventually signed in December 2015, creating the Government of National Accord (GNA). The UNSC endorsed the GNA, giving it international recognition. Yet, both the Tobruk government and Operation Libya Dawn parties had members who did not support the GNA.

By 2017, the Tobruk-based Libyan House of Representatives halted friendly relations with the GNA. In February 2017, meetings held in Cairo between Haftar and Prime Minister Sarraj failed to produce an agreement between the two sides, and the GNA became the House of Representatives' rival in governing Libya. In March, pro-

<sup>141</sup> *ibid*

<sup>142</sup> *ibid*

<sup>143</sup> *ibid*

<sup>144</sup> *ibid*

<sup>145</sup> <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13501.doc.htm>

<sup>146</sup> Anderson, Jon Lee. "Libya's New Strongman". *The New Yorker*. Retrieved 23 November 2016

<sup>147</sup> "Libyans vote for new parliament". *aljazeera.com*. Al Jazeera. Retrieved 23 November 2016.



GNA groups took control of oil facilities in the Gulf of Sidra from the eastern parliamentarians Libyan National Army. The LNA launched a counterattack, then the Libyan House of Representatives withdrew their recognition of the GNA and demanded for elections in early 2018. But after months of unproductive talks between the two sides, the general election did not occur before December.

In response to the sustained tension between the two sides, leading to unproductive and detrimental leadership, the Security Council extended the mandate of the UNSMIL until September 15, 2019 under a unanimous adoption.<sup>148</sup> Resolution 2434, which extended this mission, also dictated other tasks for UNSMIL to undertake, including supporting Libyan institutions, monitoring and reporting on human rights, and coordinating international assistance to the GNA in hopes of stabilizing post-conflict zones.<sup>149</sup>

## Contemporary Conditions

Despite several attempts by the UN and other countries to mitigate the crisis in Libya, conflict is still prevalent with several attacks being made on oil refineries which has had an adverse effect on Libya's economy. Several attacks made on Tripoli by militia groups have threatened public safety and disrupted peace in the country. This conflict has been aggravated by the illegal smuggling of arms and ammunition into the country, an act that goes against the arms embargo placed by the UN in Libya as per resolution 2292 that was implemented in

2016. "Extrajudicial killings and enforced displacement," are on the rise and as a result over three thousand have been injured by these attacks on Tripoli.<sup>150</sup> Furthermore, over two hundred thousand people remain internally displaced and the number of asylum seekers seeking refuge in other countries is on the rise.<sup>151</sup>

Countries in the EU have offered stabilizing support to the asylum seekers to alleviate the situation. Germany and other NGOs such as Sea Eye have provided charity ships to rescue migrants at sea and grant them asylum. Italy seems to have apprehension regarding the entry of migrants; however, after several negotiations with Germany they have also agreed to grant such migrants asylum to safeguard their personal security.<sup>152</sup> A case in point was the rescue of 84 migrants in the Mediterranean Sea earlier in 2019 after several airstrikes by militia groups.<sup>153</sup> The UN has also demanded that all migrant detention centers in Libya be dismantled following the militia airstrike on Tripoli that occurred on July 3, 2019, where over 120 migrants were killed when a missile hit a detention center that was not strong enough to protect its inhabitants. As a result, such detention centers were deemed unfit by the UN and were mandated to be shut down and migrants moved to more suitable locations.<sup>154</sup>

Libya's economy has also taken a toll as a result of the conflict. Macroeconomic factors are very volatile due to instability both politically and socially.<sup>155</sup> Following the attack on several oil fields in 2018 by

<sup>148</sup> <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13501.doc.htm>  
<sup>149</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> "Libya Facing 'serious Crisis? Fueled by Outsiders Bent on Dividing the Country," UN Assembly Told." *UN News*, 25 Sept. 2019, [news.un.org/en/story/2019/09/1047592](https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/09/1047592). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>151</sup> Human Rights Watch. "World Report 2019: Rights Trends in Libya." *Human Rights Watch*, 19 Jan. 2019, [www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/libya](https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/libya). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>152</sup> "Migrant Rescue Ship with 40 People Arrives in Malta After EU Deal." *The Guardian*, 4 Aug. 2019, [www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/04/migrant-rescue-ship-40-people-arrives-malta-after-eu-deal](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/04/migrant-rescue-ship-40-people-arrives-malta-after-eu-deal). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>153</sup> Doshi, Vidhi. "Dozens of Bodies Found After Migrant Boat Capsizes off Libya." *The Guardian*, 26 July 2019, [www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/26/migrants-rescued-from-sea-kept-at-libyan-centre-hit-by-airstrike](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/26/migrants-rescued-from-sea-kept-at-libyan-centre-hit-by-airstrike). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>154</sup> "UN Calls for Libyan Detention Centres to Be Shut." *BBC News*, 14 July 2019, [www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-48979672](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-48979672). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>155</sup> African Development Group Bank. "Libya Economic Outlook." *African Development Bank - Building Today, a Better Africa Tomorrow*, 26 Mar. 2019, [www.afdb.org/en/countries/north-africa/libya/libya-economic-outlook](https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/north-africa/libya/libya-economic-outlook). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

militia groups under Haftar, the GNA and LNA have battled for control of Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC), causing oil production to fall tremendously by six hundred thousand barrels a day. This battle, including over Libya's largest oil field, El Sharara, which is now shut down as a result of such security concerns, and other regional fields, has had an adverse effect on Libya's 2018 GDP.<sup>156</sup> Libya's inflation rate is also on the rise. Currently at a cumulative of 80 percent, the high inflation rate indicates the deficit of goods and services in the economy. However, the inflation rate fell from 28.5% in 2017 to 13.1% in 2018 as a result of an appreciation of their currency, the dinar, in the international currency market due to increased investor confidence in Libya following the decline in conflict at the end of 2017.<sup>157</sup> However, following the recent conflict development in 2019, the economy has plummeted further with inflation rates on the rise and a lack of jobs indicating the presence of stagflation. This has been as a result of the depreciation of the Dinar against the U.S. dollar due to uncertainty in the Libyan economy and increased deficiency payments that have reached 40% of GDP. As a result, economic growth has suffered terribly, and so economic reform has never been more necessary.<sup>158</sup>

Turning to the political side, Libya currently has three bodies claiming governance over the country, the House of Representatives, the National Salvation government and the Government of National Accord (GNA) set as the interim government by the United Nations in 2015.

Due to the expiry of the House of Representative's term and the interim Government of National Accord not being fully supported, electoral legitimacy is held by the local municipal councils making it difficult for the UN to control the political scene.<sup>159</sup> This difficulty has been amplified by the rivalry between the GNA and several militia alliances, which threatens the work of the GNA and hinders its ability to control the political situation in Libya,<sup>160</sup> leaving 50,605 registered refugees and asylum seekers, and 268,629 internally displaced persons up to count today.<sup>161</sup>

## Past United Nations and International Actions

Ever since the establishment of the political mission in Libya by implementing the 1973 resolution on September 16, 2011, the United Nations has intervened in Libya through several of its programs to help mitigate the political instability following the fall of Gaddafi's regime. This has been a combined effort of all UN agencies to work in collaboration for "political, humanitarian and development streams"<sup>162</sup> to achieve their Sustainable Development Goals. To do this, the United Nations set several goals to be achieved during its intervention in Libya:

- 1) *"Inclusive politics and a participatory post-conflict transitional process which engages all parts of Libyan society including women, youth and marginalized groups."*
- 2) *"Good governance anchored in security and the Rule of Law."*

<sup>156</sup> "Civil War in Libya."

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> "The Economic Reform Needed in Libya." 4 Sept. 2016, libyapropect.com/2016/09/the-economic-reform-needed-in-libya/. Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>159</sup> Fitzgerald, Mary. "Socio-Political Situation in Libya from the Urban Perspective." CIDOB, Feb. 2018, www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication\_series/notes\_inter

nacionals/n1\_190/socio\_political\_situation\_in\_libya\_from\_the\_urban\_perspective. Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>160</sup> Pike, John. "Libya - Politics." *GlobalSecurity.org*, 3 May 2019, www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/libya/politics.htm. Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>161</sup> "Civil War in Libya."

<sup>162</sup> United Nations. "UN in Libya." *UNSMIL*, 17 May 2017, unsmil.unmissions.org/un-libya. Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

3) *"A diversified economy and inclusive human development process."*

4) *"The delivery of lifesaving humanitarian assistance in response to the current crisis."*<sup>163</sup>

The UN agencies involved in the mission in Libya include the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Development Program, UN Habitat, UNHCR, United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), UN Women, World Food Program (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Although all have had important influences on the mission in Libya, only the most pivotal will be discussed herein.

In 2012, the FAO's assistance in the Libyan crisis began with the aim of developing the country's "agricultural sector and food security [and] protecting its natural resources."<sup>164</sup> This has included several developmental projects including pesticide administration, natural resource management and including plant and animal health and production. Moreover, with the outbreak of several diseases such as Avian Influenza, FMD & PPR, that has had an adverse effect on the farming industry, the FAO has supported affected farmers by providing specialized seeds to increase agricultural production.<sup>165</sup>

The UNDP's involvement in Libya has been present since 2011 but escalated after the outburst of the civil war in 2014 with the aim of supporting stabilization efforts, supporting the democratic transition in Libya and supporting efforts to empower civil society. In 2012, the UNDP aided in

supporting the High National Electoral Commission (HNEC) in organizing general elections for the General National Congress in 2012, the Constitutional Drafting Assembly (CDA) and the House of Representatives (HoR).<sup>166</sup> In 2016, the UNDP led an initiative in collaboration with the Government of National Accord to improve the infrastructure of Libya through several rebuilding schemes across the country.<sup>167</sup> This initiative was aided by the 2016 UN Habitat Project that conducted an infrastructure profiling scheme which involved collecting data on demographic changes as a result of the displacement of people due to conflict, water, sanitation and health levels and the functionality of infrastructure in order to give an indication as to whether reforms have to be made.<sup>168</sup>

UNICEF has also been key in the development of Libya after the 2011 crisis. With its work in Benghazi, Tripoli and Sabha, UNICEF has been able to make tremendous progress in the education, child protection, health and youth sectors through several of its initiatives. This has been a collaborative approach of Education and Management Information Systems, UNICEF's Child Protection programme and Comprehensive and gender-sensitive social inclusion programmes that culminated in the upliftment of these sectors.<sup>169</sup> A case in point is the regular immunization programs implemented by UNICEF. In 2018, UNICEF provided a "total 4.7 million doses of Measles, Rubella and Polio vaccines", and "2.75 million doses of Vitamin A supplements, syringes and safety boxes"<sup>170</sup> to aid Libya's public health.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> UNICEF, "UNICEF Airlifts 4.7 Million Doses of Measles, Rubella and Polio Vaccines for Children in Libya." UNICEF, [www.unicef.org/press-releases/unicef-airlifts-47-million-doses-measles-rubella-and-polio-vaccines-children-libya](http://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unicef-airlifts-47-million-doses-measles-rubella-and-polio-vaccines-children-libya). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

The United Nations has passed several resolutions on the Libyan crisis since 2011 to mitigate the war by combating the continuous provision of weaponry. This began with resolution 2017 in 2014 that aimed to control weapon proliferation. This was deemed ineffective and so the UN followed with two additional resolutions in 2016, resolution 2292 which placed an arms embargo on Libya banning the import of weapons and ammunition and resolution 2298 in 2016 which mandated that all "category 2 chemical weapons be transferred and destroyed outside of the country".<sup>171</sup>

Even though the United Nations has had a tremendous impact on the conditions in Libya, there has been a vast array of interventions from other countries including the United States, the EU members and Canada. This has included humanitarian and stabilization support that has aided in

the crisis.<sup>172</sup> In particular, USAID has been key in the support missions in Libya since 2011. In 2016, USAID worked closely with the Ministry of the Local Government (MOLG) to assess the current needs of Libya and helped set up several legal offices conducting internal investigations, ethics, and improved communication and negotiation skills.<sup>173</sup> This culminated in the establishment of a special program, USAID, initiated with the aim to ensure self-sufficiency and national stability to be completed by 2020.<sup>174</sup> However, countries like Qatar have been fueling the Libyan Crisis. Throughout 2011 and 2012, Qatar violated the UN arms embargo to Libya and provided weapons and ammunitions to Islamist groups through its cargo planes which escalated the Libyan conflict that followed.<sup>175</sup><sup>176</sup>

<sup>171</sup> "Libya Chronology of Events : Security Council Report." *October 2019 Monthly Forecast : Security Council Report*, [www.securitycouncilreport.org/chronology/libya.php?page=all&print=true](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/chronology/libya.php?page=all&print=true). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>172</sup>Government of Canada. "Canada-Libya Relations." *Welcome / Bienvenue | Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada / Affaires Étrangères, Commerce Et Développement Canada*, 10 Nov. 2018, [www.canadainternational.gc.ca/libya-libye/bilateral\\_relations\\_bilaterales/canada-libya-libye\\_bu.aspx?lang=eng](http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/libya-libye/bilateral_relations_bilaterales/canada-libya-libye_bu.aspx?lang=eng). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>173</sup>USAID. "USAID Helps Libya Improve Legal Framework for Decentralization." *U.S. Agency for International Development*, 8 Feb. 2018, [www.usaid.gov/libya/program-updates/dec-2017-libya-decentralization](http://www.usaid.gov/libya/program-updates/dec-2017-libya-decentralization). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> *October 2019 Monthly Forecast : Security Council Report*, [www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_2014\\_106.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2014_106.pdf). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.

<sup>176</sup> Bosalum, Feras, and Ayman Al-Warfalli. "Libyan PM Accuses Qatar of Sending Planes with Weapons to Tripoli." *U.K.*, 14 Sept. 2014, [uk.reuters.com/article/uk-libya-security-qatar/libyan-pm-accuses-qatar-of-sending-planes-with-weapons-to-tripoli-idUKKBN0H90WE20140914](http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-libya-security-qatar/libyan-pm-accuses-qatar-of-sending-planes-with-weapons-to-tripoli-idUKKBN0H90WE20140914). Accessed 6 Oct. 2019.



## Questions a Resolution Must Address

*1. What should the primary aim of the UNSMIL be in 2020?*

Given the need for an extension of the original UNSMIL mandate, it is clear that the UNSMIL has failed to meet its goals. Prioritization among its wide range of efforts must occur to ensure shorter-term results.

*2. Is the situation worse or better off now in Libya? Have conditions been improving under the UNSMIL?*

It is clear that the efforts of the UNSMIL have not created an immediate impact, but perhaps their assistance has still overall improved the political tensions in Libya. Discuss the overall impact of the presence of UNSMIL on the political climate in Libya.

*3. What is the role of the international community in assisting the UNSMIL and the GNA?*

One of the UNSMIL's primary tasks is to coordinate international assistance and provide advice to the Government of National Accord as it attempts to stabilize post-conflict zones. How can the UNSMIL address this goal and utilize the international community to support its efforts?

*4. On the flip side, what is the role of nearby states, whether in North Africa, the rest of the African continent, the Middle East, or across the Mediterranean in Europe, or relevant allies and blocs, in resolving this issue beyond UN action in the Support Mission in Libya?*

Consider the concern for civil society in response to mass atrocity crimes. In Syria, international response came mostly as a result of broken silence on civil crimes. Should the international community have a hand in assisting the UN action in Libya to condemn humanitarian crimes?

*5. Which other countries are being affected by the actions of the UNSMIL?*

Although the UNSMIL is a mission specific to Libya, it affects several countries. For example, its mandate requires that it address post-conflict zones, including those liberated from Islamic State in Iraq. Which other sovereign states are being affected, and what do those relationships look like?

*6. What specifically is the role of the UN-supported GNA in Libya and should they cede power to Haftar and the LNA to quell tensions in the brewing civil war and instead work together to eradicate terrorism in Libya?*

When reconsidering the UNSMIL mission, it is vital to address the way they will be interacting with other prominent parties in the Libyan government. Forming relationships with the government may be necessary to obtain accurate information on the current state of the nation, working with parties such as the Ministry of Justice.



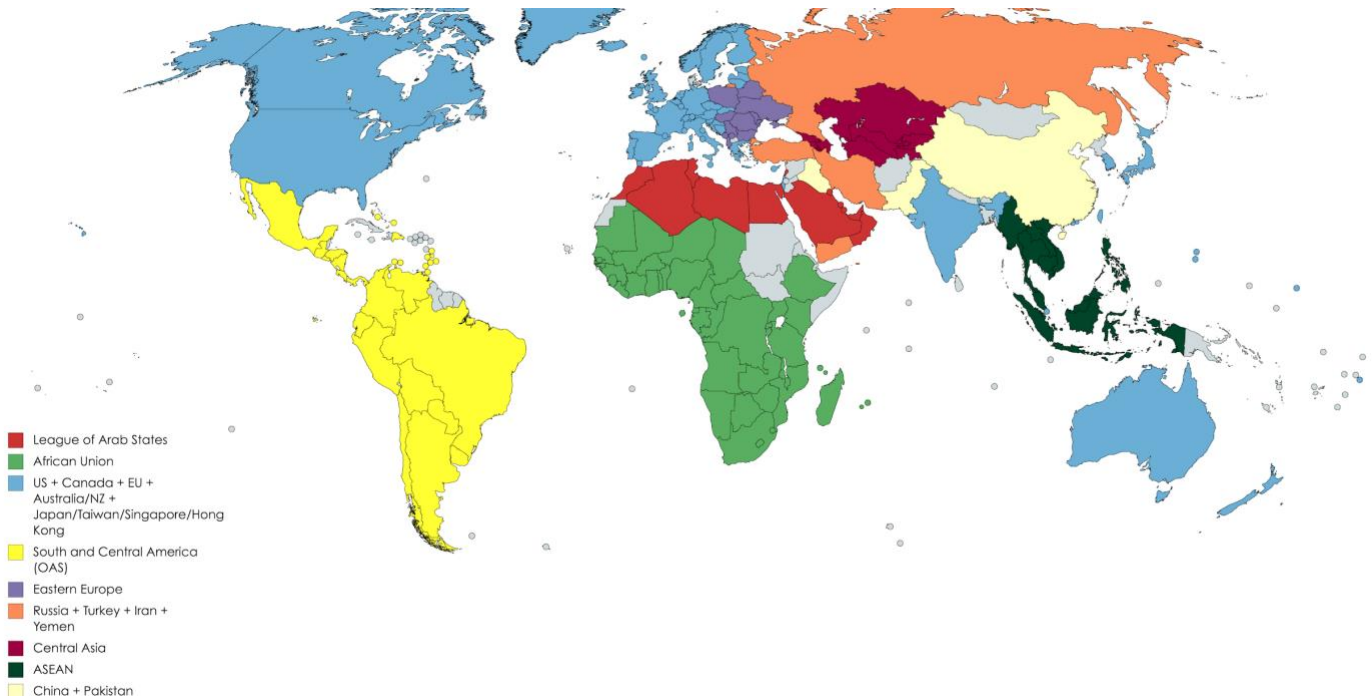
*7. Was the upheaval of Gaddafi in the Arab Spring of 2011 a mistake that caused the crisis in the first place? Or is it the start of a governmental reform, supported by the UN, in transforming and re-stabilizing Libya?*

The root cause of the need for the UNSMIL can easily be traced back to Gaddafi's government. But is the need for the UNSMIL merely a result of an overthrown government, or is it a result of improper governing practices that were in place prior to Gaddafi?

*8. How can the UNSMIL promote grassroots reconciliation in Libya to spark national reconciliation?*

Member states and the UNSMIL have a responsibility to encourage Libyans to come forward and participate in the international dialogue on the state of their nation. How can the UNSMIL facilitate these projects in order to eventually promote a future of Libya determined through civilian elections?

# Bloc Positions



All of the following bloc positions are not officially set such that delegates must follow them; they can certainly change based on the nature of the debate, blocs formed in committee, and resolutions produced during the sessions. However, these are some likely alignments, based on similar policies between member countries. Still, each bloc can potentially align with another or have splits among themselves, forming blocs with different countries or groups already formed.

## ▪ *League of Arab States*

As many of these states face Islamic extremist groups of their own or share those with Libya and others, countries like Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Oman, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait may share similar interests in Libya. Further, the League provides shared political and economic cooperation goals that can be applied to conflict resolution and support or opposition to the UNSMIL.

## ▪ *African Union*

Most of the countries in Africa, outside of maybe Sudan and South Sudan, still engaged in conflict, and Eritrea, Djibouti, and Somalia, facing oppressive regimes or complete political and social unraveling, share common interests on the African continent and would likely form a bloc together with their evaluation of the UNSMIL. This bloc, like many of the others, may not hold altogether, and can also align with other blocs in the UN committee.

- *US & Canada & EU & Australia & NZ & Japan & S. Korea & Taiwan & Hong Kong & India*

Most of these countries may be in favor of the UNSMIL, or possible amendments to it based on their re-evaluation. As common political and economic partners, joint in trade and similar democratic governing structure as well as political goals for other regions of the world, they may share similar ideals in Libya as well.

- *Eastern Europe)*

Eastern Europe has similarly seen the return to more authoritarian regimes in some of their countries, especially Poland, Hungary, Belarus, and Ukraine,<sup>177</sup> which could affect their evaluation of the success of the UNSMIL. These are countries that may disagree with the U.S.-led UNSMIL and its push for a unified democratic governing structure in the GNA, though this bloc may also simply side with many other member states of the EU and beyond in pushing for further UN action via its Support Mission.

- *South & Central America (OAS)*

This bloc may follow similar policies as the U.S.+EU bloc, though with possibly slightly more right-wing responses due to the changing political climate in the region. As many South and Central American countries currently face transitional governments of their own, namely Chile, Bolivia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Haiti,<sup>178</sup> they may be more inclined to support the domestic unrest in Libya with opposing interests as to what the final outcome should look like in the UNSMIL.

- *Russia & Turkey & Iran & Yemen*

These countries share similar anti-democratic regimes and have become large players in the Middle East, potentially unifying their force in dealing with the Libyan crisis and its resulting refugee and humanitarian catastrophe. However, each country also has very specific goals of its own, which could just as likely cause splits in this bloc.

- *Central Asia & The Caucuses*

Also similar in governing structure, as well as geographic location, these states may also present a unified force in their evaluation of the UNSMIL, either in favor of its current efforts or against the way it has been carried out so far.

<sup>177</sup> Minakov, Mykhailo. "The Authoritarian Belt in Europe's East." *Wilson Center, Kennan Institute*, 15 May 2018, [www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/the-authoritarian-belt-europes-east](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/the-authoritarian-belt-europes-east).

<sup>178</sup> Sabatini, Christopher, and Anar Bata. "Latin America's Protests Are Likely to Fail." *Foreign Policy*, 8 Nov. 2019, [foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/08/latin-americas-protests-are-likely-to-fail/](https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/08/latin-americas-protests-are-likely-to-fail/).

- *ASEAN (Southeast Asia)*

Such also applies to ASEAN; however, these are more liberal-minded, free trade-oriented countries via their regional organization, ASEAN, and its trade ties with the U.S. and other major economic powers. It would be possible to see such a bloc form along these trade lines, and potentially with Japan, Taiwan, Australia, or New Zealand as well.

- *China & Pakistan & Iran*

These are powerful and influential actors, especially China, which carries a relationship with Pakistan over the conflict region of Kashmir against India, that may choose to side together, as well as recruit other actors to follow their policy decisions on the UNSMIL. These countries have fought terrorism of their own, and are less democratically inclined, so they may prefer the side of the LNA (House of Representatives), or at least reshape the current strategy of the GNA and UNSMIL.

## Conclusion

Despite the UNSMIL, Libya still faces large-scale conflict, massive waves of refugees and illegal migrants, terrorism, and economic disaster as its civil war continues on. The GNA has been pitted against Haftar's House of Representatives, leading to violent fighting across the country and a stark division between the west, with Tripoli, and east. However, terrorism has started to reduce in presence, and the UN is pushing new talks in order to unify the two sides and stabilize the political and military situation in the country, hopefully spilling over to the social and economic spheres down the road.

The world is feeling the effects of the situation in Libya right now. Refugees from throughout Africa and within Libya are pouring across the Mediterranean Sea, terrorist groups have continued their presence there, enabling the continuation of attacks elsewhere, and countries from all over the world have gotten involved in the fight between the sides, on terrorism, or through the UN and UNSMIL.

Despite the humanitarian woes and crumbling economy faced by Libya with its crumbling infrastructure, lack of services, and persistent bombings in key cities and towns, the UN has reoriented somewhat in providing plans for human relief as well, beyond simply political dialogue between the warring sides.<sup>179</sup> But, can the UNSMIL keep the country together? Or is it doomed to failure? The future of the country and its ripple effects across the region and beyond will depend on the success or failure of the UN Support Mission in Libya, and thus a re-evaluation of its progress and objectives is essential right now.

I am confident that with your research, you, the delegates, will uncover the policies of your own countries and their stance in relation to the UN in response to this issue, and similar other ones as a benchmark, providing a foundation for your position papers and resolutions on re-evaluating such a critical issue. I look forward to seeing you all in committee, good luck with your research, and I can't wait to see the engaging, dynamic debates to come!

<sup>179</sup> "Libya Stands at a 'Critical Juncture'."



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