



UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL
WCSMUN 2017

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Letter from the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

We would like to welcome you to Westmount's 2017 Model UNSC! We are all very excited to see the heated debate on the topics on the table, and the creative solutions delegates will present. This year, our topics will be:

1. The Nuclear Threat of North Korea
2. Myanmar's Human Rights Crisis
3. The Situation in South Sudan

Formed in 1945, the United Nations Security Council is committed to maintaining international peace and security. With only fifteen member states, the UNSC is capable of passing binding resolutions; as such, delegates must act responsibly and diplomatically to create solutions to the issues they will be presented with during this committee. While this background guide is intended to give an introduction to the topics during this conference, we strongly recommend delegates do additional research to bolster their understanding have greater insight to the topics.

We are looking forward to meeting you and seeing the creative solutions delegates bring to this conference. Best of luck in your preparations!

Sincerely,
Ana Dragomir
Quentin Michalchuk
Joseph Heo

Topic 1: Situation in South Sudan

Introduction

South Sudan has been in the middle of many different conflicts and has been oppressed for thousands of years. Six years ago, South Sudan did not exist, as it was considered to be a part of Sudan. The two distinct countries have been at odds with each other since the sixth century, where the southern part of Sudan became an island of Christianity in the Islamified country. When the southern part of Sudan became independent, the government of Sudan gave their blessing. However, the question of shared oil revenues and border demarcation have continued to create tensions between the two successor states. Not only are they facing problems in the north, but they are facing internal oppression and violent riots from the citizens.

History of South Sudan

South Sudan is one of the newest countries in the world, it was an autonomous region on July 9, 2005, and then became an independent country on July 9, 2011. With a population of 12.23 million people, South Sudan has three major ethnic religions that include Christianity, Traditional African religion and Islam. This region has been negatively affected by two civil wars since the Sudanese independence in 1955. During the First Civil War (1955-1972) the Sudanese government fought the Anyanya rebel army. During the Second Sudanese Civil War (1972-2005) the government opposed the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M). As a result, the country suffered serious neglect, a lack of infrastructural development, and major destruction and displacement. More than 2.5 million people have been killed, and millions more have become refugees both within and outside the country.

Between January 9-15, 2011, there was a referendum in South Sudan to determine if South Sudan should become its own country. 98.3% of the citizens voted for independence. South Sudan formally became independent from Sudan on July 9th, although certain disputes remained, including the division of oil revenues, as 75% of all the former Sudan's oil reserves are in South Sudan. It became the 54th independent country in Africa and the 193rd member of the United Nations. South Sudan was at war with at least seven armed groups, with tens of thousands displaced. Inter-ethnic warfare raged on throughout the next two years until the civil war began.

The South Sudan Civil War

In December 2013, a political power struggle broke out between President Kiir and his former deputy Riek Machar, as the president accused Machar and ten others of attempting a coup d'état. Soldiers from the Dinka ethnic group aligned with President Kiir,

while the those from the Nuer ethnic group supported Riek Machar. These two ethnic groups fighting are the cause of the civil war. Ugandan troops were deployed to fight alongside South Sudanese government forces against the rebels. Numerous ceasefires were mediated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in opposition and were subsequently broken. In the midst of chaos, President Kiir announced that Machar had attempted a coup and violence spread quickly to Jonglei, Upper Nile, and Unity states. Since the outbreak of the conflict, armed groups have targeted civilians through the ethnic lines, committed many acts of sexual violence, destroyed property and looted villages, and recruited children into their ranks. Up to now, 300,000 people are estimated to have been killed in the war, especially in the notable atrocities such as the 2014 Bentiu massacre. Although it may not be a well-known issue, many people are hoping for the end of this war especially the displaced people. There have been many 2 million people internally displaced, and about 1 million fled to neighbouring countries such as Kenya, Sudan and Uganda.

International Involvement

Many supranational organizations are trying to help this miserable situation that is occurring in the 54th country of Africa. Some organizations include:

- African Union: The African Union mediation team, arrived in Juba (capital of South Sudan) on December 19, 2013, with delegates from Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda. They've been trying to broker peace between the two different forces.
- Intergovernmental Authority on Development: On December 27, 2013, East African leaders gave the warring factions only four days to lay down their arms or else IGAD will take action to stop the conflict. They do not accept a violent overthrow and any change in the government must come through the democratic process.
- Organization of Islamic Cooperation: The OIC has condemned the coup on the government by saying, "Within the framework of ensuring security and stability in the region and stressing the promotion of good-neighborliness among states of the region, especially between the Republics of the Sudan and Southern Sudan, the OIC General Secretariat condemned the attempted coup which took place yesterday morning in the Republic of Southern Sudan".
- United Nations: UNMISS has been deeply concerned about the environment in South Sudan and hopes that the government will broker a deal for open dialogue between the government and the opposition and resolve the conflict peacefully. Later, the United Nations Security Council was also told of as many as 500 deaths, 800 people injured and 20,000 seeking refuge at UN centres. They know that it could result in a dangerous situation and UNMISS will use force if necessary. On December 27th, 72 United Nations arrived in Juba as additional peacekeepers,

increasing the UNMISS forces to around 12,500 soldiers and 1,323 police officers. Many UN centres are having trouble keeping up with the influx of Sudanese refugees.

- International Rescue Committee: This is a global organization that has been helping a lot in the South Sudanese crisis especially humanitarian wise. They are helping to get clean food and water. They also help fund the health care services to help all citizens in South Sudan.

Humanitarian Aid

Violence has been preventing farmers from planting or harvesting crops, causing food shortages all over South Sudan. The conflict in South Sudan is categorized as a “Level 3” humanitarian emergency by the UN as a, based on the scale, urgency, and complexity of needs. In July 2014, the United Nations Security Council declared South Sudan’s food crisis the worst in the world. It warned that a third of South Sudan’s population could be affected and up to fifty thousand children could die of hunger. Not only is food and water an issue, but there is also a severe shortage of health care services and professionals (there is only one doctor for every 100,000 people). Medical facilities are under-equipped and completely unhygienic. Since many South Sudanese do not have access to clean water, it allows for many deadly diseases such as malaria to continue to spread. Many supranational such as the International Rescue Committee or UNMISS have been trying to help South Sudan in various ways with money and providing health resources for the citizens of South Sudan and providing economic wellbeing for all.

Prospects of Solutions to the Conflict

At minimum, a process of political reconciliation must begin between Salva Kiir, Riek Machar, Pagan Amum and their supporters. Creating a democracy with different government parties may also help ease the issue, making all voices heard throughout the country. The worst option would be seeking a military solution such as what the Khartoum regime did, which tried to crush rebels in Darfur for ten years. Ironically, the best bet for Salva Kiir to remain in power would be to count on the support of President Omar al-Bashir, who is the seventh president of Sudan. This is also the person that the government fought against for over several decades. If the situation continues to run out of hand, the Nuer militia might take control over oilfields in their homelands, and that would cut off the oil flow to Khartoum, endangering the stability of the South Sudanese economy and thereby putting the regime at higher risk of a popular uprising.

Resources

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Topic 2: North Korea Nuclear Crisis

Introduction

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, commonly known as North Korea, is a country located within East Asia. Covering an area of 120,540 square kilometers, it consists of the northern part of the Korean Peninsula, and is bordered by the People's Republic of China and Republic of Korea. Like its southern counterpart, North Korea claims to be the legitimate government of the entire peninsula. The population of the country is 25 million, with Pyongyang as the nation's capital. There is no official religion in North Korea, and as such, it is an atheist state. It remains a command economy where the state owns almost all means of production and development priorities are defined by the government. It has maintained one of the most closed and centralized economies in the world since the 1940s, with the eventual goal of being self-sufficient. The country has a gross domestic product of 583.00 USD per capita, leaving North Korea as one of the countries with the lowest GDP per capita. Several international organizations have referred to North Korea as one of the nations with the poorest human rights record, with "some of the world's most brutalized people" according to the Human Rights Watch. This is largely due to the severe restrictions placed on personal, political, and economic freedoms. Although North Korea regards itself as a self-reliant socialist state, critics say otherwise, with human rights violations having "no parallel in the contemporary world". To say the least, many of this nation's political relations have been strained, due to its unique stance on itself and the world.

Current Situation

In North Korea, efforts to develop a ballistic missile capable of hitting the US mainland have accelerated, with its first successful Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) launch occurring on July 4th, which was followed by other successful tests. The government claims that the Hwasong-14, tested on July 28th, is capable of reaching the United States. This sudden advancement in nuclear and missile technology indicates the growing abilities of the North Korean regime. In order to create an effective missile that can reach the United States, North Korea must still miniaturize a nuclear bomb that can be used for the ICBM. An underground test on September 3rd indicates that this milestone may be in reach; an assessment by United States and East Asian intelligence officials concludes North Korea will be capable of launching a nuclear-capable, intercontinental ballistic missile as early as next year. Potential targets include United States-controlled military and defense bases, as well as Southeastern Korea, Japan and others, with more specifics seen through propaganda. Tensions between North Korea and other nations, particularly the United States, have been rising, as indicated by the movement of military personnel in the region and statements made the United States' head of state.

History

After the Russo-Japanese War, Korea was occupied by Japan (1910-45). After the Second World War in 1945, Korea was divided in half along the 38th parallel, with the northern half supported by the Soviet Union, and the southern by the United States. North Korea was founded on September 9th, 1948, with Shtykov as ambassador and Kim Il-Sung as premier. Sympathetic to Kim's goal of Korean unification under socialism, the two rallied Stalin to support a blitzkrieg of the south, resulting in the Korean War; the Korean war ran from 1950-1953 and consisted predominantly of a proxy war between the United States, and China and Russia. Since the war, the United States has maintained a strong military presence in South Korea and today, the most heavily guarded demilitarized zone in the world separates the peninsula. North Korea claims the war was started by South Korea and the US. The recovery from the war was initially rapid, until North Korea developed "Juche" ideologies, where self-reliance was emphasized, to differentiate it from Russia and China. These ideas of self-reliance led to economic collapse when ties with China were severed, and the loss of support from Russia due to the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, relations with South Korea did not improve. In 1994, Kim Il-Sung died of a heart attack, in the midst of a nuclear development issue with the United States; the next leader, Kim Jong-Il then took over. Around this time, seeking peaceful reunification, the Agreed Framework and the Sunshine Policy were created, and North Korea started the long-term rehabilitation process with South Korea, the United States, and the rest of the world, while nuclear weapons production halted. With the election of president Bush in 2001, the Sunshine policy and the Agreed Framework came to an end. This prompted North Korea to conduct its first nuclear test on October 6th, 2009. Tensions escalated between South Korea, North Korea and the United States through a series of events during Obama's policy of "strategic patience". In December 2011, Kim Jong-Il died of a heart attack, and Kim Jong-Un, his youngest son, was announced as his successor. Over the following years, the country continued to develop nuclear weapons despite international condemnation, with the first successful ICBM test occurring on July 4th, 2017.

UN Involvement and Bloc Positions

Action has been taken within the UN, mostly in the form of sanctions against North Korea. Various stances are present today regarding the North Korean nuclear crisis; however, many UN members states have denounced North Korea's nuclear tests, and calls for the denuclearization of North Korea.

The United States and Allies

The United States, along with nations such as South Korea have issued a statement that they will not hesitate to retaliate should North Korea choose to mount an offensive. Additionally, while many nations have not yet formally declared support of one side in the conflict, many have expressed their concerns regarding North Korea's provocative actions, and recommends the North Korean government back down.

North Korean Allies

North Korea's allies, particularly China, have constantly been pushing for a more peaceful solution. Furthermore, according to the 1961 Sino-North Korean Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance states that should North Korea come under unprovoked aggression, China will come to North Korea's aid. However, China has also stated that it will remain neutral should North Korea be the first to threaten the United States and its allies with missiles - something that may be a rapidly-approaching reality.

Neutral Nations

Many nations have not yet formally declared support of either the United States or North Korea, such as those involved in the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. Amongst these neutral nations, many have expressed their support for diplomatic solutions as well as the reinstatement of a dialogue, such as the Six Party Talks.

Solutions

The situation in North Korea is not only an issue internationally, but also poses a threat to the unknowing inhabitants within. When determining a solution to the rapidly escalating situation regarding North Korea, the use of both peaceful negotiations and military force must be considered.

Resources

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Topic 3: Crisis in Myanmar

Introduction

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, also known as Burma for various political reasons, is a southeast Asian country of some 51 million people. Prior to the recent crisis, around 1 million of those living in Myanmar were Rohingya people. The government of Myanmar does not recognize the Rohingya as an official national race, denying them citizenship since 1982. The Rohingya people lack many basic rights and freedoms in their country, being denied the ability to travel without express government permission. They are barred from owning land and may not have more than two children, among other things. Accounts of forced labour have been reported in the past. The Rohingya have faced numerous bouts of violent persecution from the Buddhist majority at different times in the last 40 years, the most recent unfolding right now. Nearly 400,000 Rohingyas have fled the country since the latest crackdown on August 25th of this year. The government of Myanmar and notably Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, the State Chancellor of Myanmar are under criticism for their lack of action and indeed, the failure to officially acknowledge the extent of the problem.

Myanmar

Myanmar shares land borders with China, India, Bangladesh, Thailand and Laos. The dominant ethnic group, the Bamar, make up 68% of the population, while before the 2016-2017 crisis Rohingyas made up less than 3% of the country's population. Myanmar is a predominantly Buddhist country, following a local rite is known as Theravada Buddhism. Approximately 88% of the population is Buddhist while only 4.3% is Muslim. In addition to ongoing issues with minority groups such as the Rohingya or the Karen, Myanmar is also the second largest opium producer as part of the Golden Triangle and a source country for human trafficking with many Burmese people being sold into prostitution or forced labour.

History

The British began the slow process of conquering Myanmar in 1824, finally succeeding in ruling the entirety of the country in 1886. Administered as a province of British India until 1937, the Burmese had no great love for their British overlords. Numerous violent protests were rocking the capital at the time, Rangoon. British administration collapsed with the occasion of the Japanese invasion of Myanmar at the beginning of the second World War. Many of the Burmese fought on the side of the Japanese with the Burma Independence Army formed by Aung San. Those who served in the British Burma Army were generally from ethnic minorities within Myanmar such as the Rohingya. In the wake of World War II, Aung San negotiated an agreement that assured Myanmar's independence. Aung San later went on to be assassinated while serving as the Deputy

Chairman of the transitional government at the time. The current de facto leader of Myanmar and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Aung San Suu Kyi, is the daughter of that Aung San. Myanmar gained independence on January 4th, 1948, rejecting Commonwealth membership as well, effectively cutting off ties with Britain once and for all. Following independence, Myanmar enjoyed a brief period of parliamentary government before the military coup in 1962 led by Ne Win. Since then, Myanmar has gone through a succession of restrictive military governments. Almost everything was nationalized during this period with the new constitution of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma being introduced in 1974. The nation sought to emulate the Soviet Union, and indeed, Myanmar was ruled as a one-party state until 1988. During this period, Myanmar was faced with violent protest from the people, particularly initiated by students. 1988 saw the 8888 Uprising (so named because it occurred on August 8th, 1988), a nationwide protest advocating for democracy. Thousands were killed, and another military coup occurred, forming the State Law and Order Restoration Council. The next few years saw a lot of change under the leadership of the SLORC. The country name was officially changed to the Union of Myanmar in 1989 and the year after saw the first free election in nearly 30 years. What could have been a triumph for democracy, resulted in the military government's refusal to give power to the party winning 80% of seats, which was the current State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi's party. Since then multiple violent uprisings (see Saffron Revolution), so-called "incidents", and civil conflict between the main ethnic group within Myanmar and minorities have impacted Myanmar's interactions with other nations. The military government's dissolution in 2011 eventually led to Aung San Suu Kyi's triumph and what many regard as a shift towards liberal democracy. However, Myanmar's socio-political landscape continues to be shaped by conflict between the Burmese Army and various groups.

The Rohingya People

Since the 2015 crisis, over 900,000 Rohingyas have escaped from Myanmar to surrounding countries such as Bangladesh and Thailand. Some have fled further to Muslim nations such as Pakistan. On August 25th of this year, in retaliation to a Rohingya rebel attack, the military began a series of operations which have thus far resulted in the deaths of Rohingyas in the hundreds. Many more have been injured, entire villages have been burned, and an additional 400,000 or more have fled into Bangladesh to escape persecution. This has been regarded internationally by many as a campaign of ethnic cleansing. Locally, however, there is a lot of support for the military's actions from the Buddhist majority. Rohingyas mainly live in the Rakhine State, formerly known as the Arakan State in Myanmar, a region on the west coast of the country, bordering Bangladesh to the north. They are predominantly Muslim and are not officially recognized as citizens of Myanmar by the government which defines them as stateless Bengalis. The

only way to claim citizenship for Rohingyas is to prove that their ancestors had settled in Myanmar prior to 1823. The Rohingya claim to have lived in Myanmar for centuries, and indeed there are records of Muslims serving in the court of a Buddhist king in the Arakan region in the 1400s. However, this is fairly impossible to prove for many. But why is there so much hatred directed at the Rohingyas? Firstly, they are not Buddhist. Throughout history, religious minorities have often been oppressed or regarded with suspicion. In a predominantly Buddhist country like Myanmar, this is no exception. Secondly, there is lingering hatred towards the Rohingyas for fighting in the British Burma Army during WWII. Lastly, in 1826 the British encouraged Bengali farmers to move into the largely unpopulated Rakhine province, much to the displeasure of the local Buddhist Burmese. This created the idea that Rohingyas are illegal immigrants that are creating issues to this day. In short, religious tensions, actions were taken during WWII, and the decisions made by rulers during the colonial period are in large part responsible or at least contribute to the crisis we see today.

Past UN Action

In the past, measures have been taken by various UN bodies without a marked improvement in the overall situation in Myanmar. For example, following the violence in the early 90's, the UNHCR began a repatriation programme for Rohingyas who had sought refuge in Bangladesh. However, this action was criticised for a number of reasons, most importantly because the human rights situation in Myanmar had not fundamentally improved. As of right now, there are several calls for the UN to take action from various country leaders. In addition to this, regrettably, aid from the UN, as well as other international bodies, is being blocked from assisting those affected.

Resources

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