

Study Guide



United Nations Historic General
Assembly
(SPECPOL)

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSONS

Delegates,

It is our privilege to welcome you to the United Nations General Assembly – Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL), 1973, at the fourteenth edition of La Martiniere Calcutta Model United Nations.

Having engaged in the bittersweet activity known as MUN for over three years, we chairpersons know the stereotype associated with a General Assembly committee – boring and repetitive. It is thus our goal to abolish this stereotype through this committee. This year's UNHGA-SPECPOL promises to maintain a balance between conventional and crisis, culminating an experience we are sure would be unforgettable for most. Having engaged in the bittersweet activity known as MUN for over three years, we chairpersons know the stereotype associated with a General Assembly committee – boring and repetitive. It is thus our goal to abolish this stereotype through this committee. This year's UNHGA-SPECPOL promises to maintain a balance between conventional and crisis, culminating an experience we are sure would be unforgettable for most.

The agenda before this assembly is one of immediate and profound global significance. The Middle East, a region long defined by conflict and competing claims, stands once again at the brink of transformation. The aftermath of the Six-Day War has left behind more than altered borders it has entrenched grievances, inflamed national pride, and created a fragile equilibrium sustained only by deterrence and distrust.

On the dawn of 6th October 1973, that fragile silence is shattered. Coordinated military offensives across the Suez Canal and the Golan Heights signal the beginning of a conflict that threatens not only regional stability, but the balance of power across the world. This is not a war confined to territory it is a struggle for legitimacy, sovereignty, and survival.

The implications of this war extend far beyond the battlefield. The involvement of global superpowers risks escalating a regional confrontation into a broader

international crisis. The weaponization of oil, the flow of military aid, and the polarization of alliances create a volatile geopolitical environment where each decision taken within this committee could reverberate across continents. The credibility of international institutions, including this very assembly, hangs in the balance.

The disruptive nature of the committee requires delegates to have a nuanced understanding of international law, mandate and in-depth knowledge of the clashing ideologies and influences that are shaping the region. As this is a double delegate committee, we expect no compromises – whether it is paperwork, lobbying or speeches. To excel in this committee, we delegates must perform on all three fronts.

The situation in the Middle East is extremely tender and fragile, as it threatens to twist the existential fabric of the entire region and possibly the world. The coups and rebellions are just the beginning and what looms ahead may require this committee to transcend its mandate and take up an extremely important task – to prevent the sixth, and possibly final, extinction.

The rest, we leave to you delegates.

Shiv Chatterjee and Aryan Jain,
Chairpersons,

The United Nations (Historic) General Assembly – SPECPOL,
La Martiniere Calcutta Model United Nations 2026.

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TOPIC AREA SUMMARY

The Middle East, arguably the most important yet turmoil-ridden region in the world. Here, even small skirmishes cause fear of an all-out conflict, and foreign influences aggravate the matter. The history of the Middle East changed with the Balfour Declaration, providing for a Jewish nation in the Palestinian region and with the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

Following that, the Middle East has seen several Zionist and Arab conflicts, whether it be the Arab Israeli War, the Suez Crisis or the humiliating Six-Day War, which caused a dent in Arab prestige and honor. Furthermore, the antagonizing acts of the State of Israel, causing the displacement of Arabs and the Arab Republic of Egypt blocking the Gulf of Aqaba, Strait of Tiran and Suez Canal, affected Global economic peace and security.

The major matter, however, was of religious sentiments and global honor. After the war, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Syria and the Hashemite Republic of Jordan were in shambles with their own people protesting for action against the Zionist regime.

The attack on the 6th of October 1973 was just the final nail in the coffin of Middle Eastern peace, causing an all-out conflict.

That begs the question, what can be done to provide relief to the millions of people who must face the hardships of the time with hope that peace will return and their safety will be assured? What can be done to effectively cut off the illicit arms trade routes that have indirectly led to the unnecessary deaths of so many? That is the objective of this General Assembly - to restore sanctity. Be sure that the journey will be one with several bumps along the way - will this committee come together and persevere, or fail to settle the disharmony within the Middle East?

ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is the main policy-making, deliberative and representative organ of the United Nations (UN). It facilitates an equal representation of 135 Member States (as of freeze date), and each member has the equal opportunity of voting and presenting their opinions. Established in 1945 under the United Nations Charter, this body serves as a platform for all member states to convene, debate, and forge collective action on a vast range of global issues, including peace and security, sustainable development, human rights, and other matters of global concern. UNGA's mandate embodies the principle of sovereign equality, granting each member state, irrespective of its size or might, an equal vote and voice in shaping the global agenda. The UNGA's strength lies in its ability to foster inclusive multilateralism, providing a platform for nations to transcend their differences and work towards shared goals that promote peace, security, and human progress.

We acknowledge that the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL) had not been formally established as of the freeze date. However, at the discretion of the Executive Board, this committee will be simulated in the capacity of SPECPOL, as it most accurately aligns with the scope and objectives of the agenda. This decision has been made to ensure a more structured, relevant, and engaging debate, while maintaining the spirit of historical accuracy and meaningful dialogue.

Mandate of the UNGA

The UNGA works under Chapter IV of the UN Charter, which gives the committee the power to make recommendations on situations concerned with disarmament, security threats, and prevention of conflicts. The same chapter also gives the outline of the responsibilities and limitations of the General Assembly. Chapter IV of the UN Charter can be found [here](#). The main aspects of the UNGA as defined by this Chapter are as follows:

Limitations of the UNGA

- The resolutions passed by the General Assembly are purely recommendatory in nature, i.e., they are not legally binding on any of the member States. However, a UNGA resolution does represent the geopolitical stance of the member States, but carries political weightage and contributes in shaping global policies. These resolutions have the potential to influence international law, set diplomatic examples, and lay the base for international treaties and regulations that could be highly useful to solve problems that plague our world.
- The Decisions taken in the UNGA are taken through a majority vote, and important matters (like that of security and financial concerns) require a two-thirds majority.
- While the Security Council is exercising in respect of any dispute or situation the functions assigned to it in the present Charter, the General Assembly shall not make any recommendation with regard to that dispute or situation unless the Security Council so requests.
- The UNGA SPECPOL cannot impose sanctions or undertake any military action.

Responsibilities of UNGA

- Promotion of international cooperation in the political field and encouraging the progressive development of international law and its codification.
- Promotion of international cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, educational, and health fields, and assisting in the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.
- The UNGA coordinates with the various UN Agencies, like the UNESCO, WHO, and UNHCR (looks into matters of refuge), in order to make sure that the objectives of these agencies are in accordance with the priorities of the international community at large.
- The General Assembly shall receive and consider annual and special reports from the Security Council; these reports shall include an account of the measures that the Security Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security.
- The General Assembly shall receive and consider reports from the other organs of the United Nations.

Powers & Role of the UNGA

The authority of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is enshrined in the United Nations Charter, granting it wide-ranging deliberative, supervisory, and recommendatory functions across international affairs. As the most representative organ of the United Nations, it serves as a central forum for discussion, consensus-building, and norm-setting among Member States.

- Under Article 10 of the UN Charter, the UNGA is empowered to discuss any matter within the scope of the Charter and make recommendations to Member States or the Security Council. This establishes its role as the primary platform for global dialogue.
- Article 11 of the UN Charter authorizes the Assembly to consider and recommend principles relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, including disarmament and the regulation of armaments. It may also discuss any such matters brought before it by Member States or the Security Council. Where binding action is required, the Assembly refers the matter to the Security Council, either before or after discussion. Additionally, it may call the attention of the Security Council to situations that are likely to endanger international peace and security.
- According to Article 13 of the UN Charter, the UNGA may initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international cooperation in political, economic, social, cultural, educational, and health fields, as well as in the advancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Further strengthening its institutional role, Article 17 of the UN Charter grants the General Assembly authority over the UN budget, including the approval of expenditures and the accommodation of financial contributions among Member States.
- Under Article 18 of the UN Charter, the UNGA contributes to the progressive development and codification of international law, reinforcing its influence in shaping long term global legal frameworks.
- Beyond these provisions, the General Assembly may recommend measures for the peaceful adjustment of any situation, regardless of origin that it deems likely to impair general welfare, international stability, or friendly relations among nations, including situations arising from violations of the UN Charter. It may also consider general principles of cooperation in maintaining international peace and security and issue recommendations accordingly.

Functions of the UNGA SPECPOL

1) Decolonization and Self-Determination

SPECPOL plays a crucial role in addressing issues related to decolonization and ensuring the right to self-determination for all citizens of the Member Nations.

This includes:

- Monitoring Non-Self-Governing Territories and supporting their transition towards independence or self-governance
- Examining political, economic, and social conditions in such territories.
- Recommending measures to accelerate the process of decolonization in accordance with international law.

2) Political Issues and Conflict Resolution

SPECPOL addresses a wide range of political matters that do not fall under the purview of the First Committee. These include:

- Consideration of regional conflicts and disputes that impact international peace and stability.
- Addressing issues such as refugees, peacekeeping operations, and political instability.
- Recommending peaceful solutions and confidence-building measures among Member States.

3) Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions

The committee reviews and supports UN peacekeeping and political missions across the globe. This includes:

- Evaluating the effectiveness and mandates of peacekeeping operations.
- Addressing challenges faced by missions in conflict and post-conflict zones.
- Recommending improvements in operational efficiency and coordination.

4) Addressing Global Governance and Special Issues

SPECPOL deals with emerging and specialized global concerns that require international cooperation. These include:

- a) Outer space governance and the peaceful uses of space.
- b) The question of Palestine and broader Middle East issues.
- c) Effects of atomic radiation and information-related concerns.

5) Promotion of Multilateral Dialogue

SPECPOL serves as an inclusive platform for all Member States to deliberate on sensitive political issues.

- a) Encourages diplomatic engagement and consensus-building.
- b) Facilitates cooperation among nations on complex global challenges.

6) Coordination with UN Bodies

Although SPECPOL's resolutions are non-binding, it works closely with other UN organs and agencies to ensure implementation.

- a) Collaborates with the Security Council, Secretariat, and specialized agencies.
- b) Engages with bodies such as UN peacekeeping departments and related organizations to support its mandates.

THE UNITING FOR PEACE RESOLUTION

Deadlock in the United Nations Security Council

A deadlock in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) occurs when one or more of the five permanent members (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States of America) use their veto power even if at least 9 of the 15 members (i.e. majority) support a resolution. This negative vote or veto creates a situation where the national or political interests of the P5 nations obstruct the United Nations Security Council from taking necessary actions with regards to the crisis being discussed. Because of this veto, the UNSC fails to pass a resolution, and thus is unable to take any action. This makes the global resolution of conflicts and humanitarian crises, and peacekeeping efforts come to a halt. Such a situation in the United Nations Security Council is referred to as a “deadlock.”

The deadlock often originates due to long standing differences in the political perspectives of the States. For example, during the discussion of crises like those in Ukraine, Gaza, and North Korea, the P5 nations have used their vetoes to protect their own interests or the interests of their allies. Russia and China, for instance, have repeatedly blocked actions that could pressure their allies, while the US has vetoed resolutions which went against Israel.

Thus, the veto power given to the P5 nations occasionally prevents the UNSC from taking necessary measures to enforce international peace and security. This leads to the invoking of the “Uniting for Peace” resolution.

The Uniting for Peace Resolution

The Uniting for Peace Resolution or the Acheson Plan, as it was once popularly called, was adopted by the UN General Assembly on November 3, 1950, as the UN General Assembly Resolution 377A(V).

It is commonly conceded that its procedures were designed to help surmount an apparently major obstacle to the operation of the UN – the Soviet veto or its alleged abuse, and the concomitant stagnation of the Security Council. Its particulars were the product, at least in part, of both the accidents and the demands of the Korean War. The United Nations Security Council could and did adopt resolutions of substance pertaining to Korea up until the time (August 1, 1950) the Soviet delegate returned, after which it adopted no other resolution; moreover, there was a UN commission already stationed in Korea which could and did report to the United Nations Security Council immediately upon the outbreak of hostilities in the month of June, 1950.

The resolution belonged to a longer evolutionary history, too. The general shift in emphasis away from the United Nations Security Council was manifested even before the Korean War by the creation of an "Interim Committee" of the General Assembly in 1947. The Uniting for Peace Resolution was more or less a reflection of the immediate environment of the Korean crisis, but it was also part of the main stream of basic institutional change, to which it contributed at the same time.

The intent and design of the original Charter was that disputes endangering international peace and security should be taken care of by action of the Security Council through the method, if finally necessary, of dispatching UN military forces against the offending State or States. The Security Council, however, had for the most part, proven incompetent in this respect; and there were no UN military forces at all. The Uniting for Peace Resolution would rectify this situation by providing for the following four changes in organization and procedure:

1. The authority to transfer a peace and security issue to the General Assembly if the Security Council was blocked by veto.
2. The capacity to call emergency sessions of the Assembly, if necessary, for this purpose.
3. A recommendation that Member States maintain special UN-designated units in their respective national armed forces.

4. The creation of –

- A Peace Observation Commission
- A Panel of Military Expert
- A Collective Measures Committee

Thus, the central problems of maintaining international peace and security would be solved by advance warning through the Peace Observation Commission; by expeditious shifting of the dispute from the stymied Council to the vetoless Assembly; by use, if necessary, of voluntarily and unilaterally earmarked forces; and by further long-term planning through the Collective Measures Committee.

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution 377 A (V), the "Uniting for Peace" resolution is a resolution which comes into action in cases where the United Nations Security Council has failed to act due to a lack of unanimity among the five permanent members or the P5. *“The resolution states that The United Nations General Assembly shall take a matter into consideration if The United Nations Security Council fails to act, owing to the negative vote of a Permanent Member, in a case where there appears to be a threat to, or breach of peace, or an act of aggression.”* The Assembly can consider the matter immediately in order to make recommendations to Members for collective measures to maintain, or restore, international peace and security. In the interest of maintaining international security and peace, the United Nations General Assembly shall treat the matter as urgent and may call for Emergency Special Sessions (ESS) to introduce the matter to its Member States so that the matter may be solved with immediate effect.

The “Uniting for Peace” resolution was adopted on 3 November 1950, after fourteen days of Assembly deliberations. The resolution was intended to provide the United Nations with an alternative means for responding whenever at least one P5 member vetoes a United Nations Security Council resolution acting in line with its functions as provided for in the UN Charter. In the case of a deadlocked Security Council, to facilitate an urgent action by the General Assembly, the resolution has been invoked a total of 12 times, out of which the assembly convened an Emergency Special Session (ESS) 11 times (as of 2026).

The 11 Emergency Special Sessions of the General Assembly are as follows:

1st Session: Middle East (1-10 November, 1956)

2nd Session: Hungary (4-10 November, 1956)

3rd Session: Middle East (8-21 August, 1958)

4th Session: Question of Congo (17-19 September, 1960)

5th Session: Middle East (17-18 June, 1967)

6th Session: Situation in Afghanistan (10-14 January, 1980)

7th Session: Question of Palestine (22-29 July, 1980; 20-28 April, 1982; 25-26 June, 1982; 16-19 August, 1982; and 24 September, 1982)

8th Session: Question of Namibia (13-14 September, 1981)

9th Session: Situation in the occupied Arab territories (29th January - 5th February, 1982)

10th Session: Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

11th Session: Situation in Ukraine

Unlike the preceding ESSs, the tenth and eleventh ESS sessions have been repeatedly 'adjourned' and 'resumed' over the years of their operation, now still under temporary adjournment. Indeed, more than ten separate 'plenary meetings' have been held by the Assembly during the tenth ESS since 2000, and over twenty during the eleventh ESS since 2022.

The past instances of invoking the “Uniting for Peace” resolution have resulted in the United Nations being able to produce useful and beneficial results by adopting several resolutions to solve various issues and crises. These include Resolution 1000 (ES-I), mandating UN Emergency Force (UNEF); Resolution 1004 (ES-I), mandating a commission of inquiry into foreign intervention in Hungary; Resolution 1237 (ES-II), calling for early withdrawal of foreign troops from Jordan and Lebanon; Resolution 1474 (ES-IV), confirming the mandate of the UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC); Resolution ES-6/2, calling for the immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan; Resolution ES-9/1, declaring Israel a non-peace-loving State and calling on members to apply a number of measures on Israel; Resolutions 2253 and 2254 (ES-V), calling on Israel to rescind unilateral measures in Jerusalem; Resolutions (ES-7/2 through ES-7/9), calling for the unconditional and total withdrawal of Israel from territories occupied since 1967; and more.

Changes in the Powers and Functions of the UNGA

The General Assembly was originally created with the intention of serving as a recommendatory body, wherein the resolution passed would not impose a legal obligation on the Member States to follow that resolution. The resolutions passed serve to provide a general perspective of all Member States on a certain matter.

The Uniting for Peace resolution, however, increases the gravitas of resolutions passed by the General Assembly. By mandating the General Assembly to “consider the matter immediately” and to make recommendations for collective measures, including use of armed force, when necessary, the resolution practically gave the UNGA room to step into the traditional function of the United Nations Security Council. This is a clear extension of the Assembly's mandate, transforming the UNGA from a purely recommendatory body to an active forum addressing security issues when the United Nations Security Council faltered.

This resolution introduces the mechanism of Emergency Special Sessions (ESS). In brief, if the Security Council for any reason does not seem to act because of the lack of unanimity among its permanent members, the General Assembly can call an ESS meeting to convene within 24 hours. This mechanism has been invoked several times during these decades, most notably during the Suez Crisis in 1956, thereby solidifying the UNGA as an important alternative venue for addressing breaches of international peace.

Nonetheless, Assembly recommendations continue to be non-binding, but their political and normative weight greatly increases their impact. Additionally, it allows the committee to recommend collective measures. The Uniting for Peace resolution allows the UNGA to offset the veto-dominated decision-making mechanism of the Security Council, further contributing to the law-making fashioning of customary international law on collective security.

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BACKGROUND

The origins of the Yom Kippur War lie in a complex interplay of nationalism, colonial legacy, territorial disputes, and ideological conflict that developed over decades in the Middle East. To fully understand the outbreak of war in October 1973, it is essential to examine the long-standing tensions between Arab states and the state of Israel, particularly the unresolved consequences of earlier wars and the broader Arab-Israeli conflict.

The roots of the conflict can be traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries with the rise of Zionism, a movement advocating for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, then part of the declining Ottoman Empire. At the same time, Arab nationalism was also gaining momentum, with local Arab populations seeking independence from imperial rule and opposing large-scale Jewish immigration. Following World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Palestine came under British control through the League of Nations Mandate system. The Balfour Declaration, in which Britain expressed support for a Jewish national home in Palestine, further intensified tensions between Jewish and Arab communities.

During the British Mandate period (1920 - 1948), violence between Jewish and Arab groups escalated significantly. Jewish immigration increased, particularly due to persecution in Europe, while Arab populations feared displacement and loss of political control. Britain struggled to manage the conflicting demands of both groups, leading to periodic outbreaks of violence and failed attempts at compromise. By the end of World War II, international support for the creation of a Jewish state had grown, culminating in the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine, which proposed dividing Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states. While Jewish leaders accepted the plan, Arab leaders rejected it, arguing it was unjust and violated the rights of the Arab majority.

The declaration of the State of Israel in May 1948 led immediately to the Arab-Israeli War of 1948, in which neighbouring Arab states including Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq invaded. Israel ultimately emerged victorious, expanding beyond the borders allocated by the UN plan. This war resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, an event known as the Nakba (“catastrophe”) in Arab historical memory. The war ended with armistice agreements in 1949, but no formal peace treaties were signed, leaving the region in a state of ongoing hostility.

In the years following 1948, tensions remained high. Border skirmishes, refugee issues, and ideological hostility characterized relations between Israel and its Arab neighbours. One of the most significant developments was the rise of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, who became a leading figure in Arab nationalism. Nasser sought to challenge Western influence and unify Arab states against Israel. His policies and rhetoric significantly shaped the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East during the 1950s and 1960s.

The next major turning point came with the Suez Crisis. In 1956, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, previously controlled by British and French interests. In response, Britain, France, and Israel launched a coordinated military attack on Egypt. Although Israel achieved military success in the Sinai Peninsula, international pressure particularly from the United States and the Soviet Union forced the invading powers to withdraw. The crisis elevated

Nasser's status in the Arab world and reinforced the perception of Israel as aligned with Western powers.

Throughout the 1960s, tensions escalated further due to ongoing border clashes, Palestinian guerrilla activities, and competing alliances in the Cold War context. The Soviet Union supported several Arab states, while the United States increasingly aligned with Israel. The situation reached a breaking point in June 1967 with the outbreak of the Six-Day War. In a pre-emptive strike, Israel launched attacks against Egypt, Syria, and Jordan, achieving a decisive victory in just six days. As a result, Israel captured significant territories: the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria.

The outcome of the Six-Day War dramatically altered the strategic and political dynamics of the region. For Israel, the victory provided greater security depth and territorial control. However, for Arab states, the defeat was a profound humiliation and a catalyst for future conflict. The loss of territory, particularly the Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights, became central issues driving Arab policy in the years that followed. The war also intensified Palestinian nationalism and led to increased activity by organizations such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

In the aftermath of the Six-Day War, the United Nations attempted to establish a framework for peace through United Nations Security Council Resolution 242. This resolution called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from territories occupied during the conflict and the recognition of all states' right to live in peace within secure borders. However, the resolution's ambiguous wording led to differing interpretations, preventing its effective implementation. Israel emphasized the need for secure and recognized boundaries before withdrawal, while Arab states insisted on full withdrawal as a precondition for peace.

The late 1960s and early 1970s were marked by continued hostility and intermittent conflict. Egypt, under Nasser and later his successor Anwar Sadat, engaged in the War of Attrition (1967 - 1970) against Israel, primarily along the Suez Canal. This conflict involved artillery duels, air raids, and limited ground operations, causing significant casualties on both sides but failing to produce a decisive outcome. The war ended in a ceasefire brokered with the involvement of the United States.

After assuming power in 1970, Sadat sought to regain Egyptian territory, particularly the Sinai Peninsula, which remained under Israeli control. Diplomatic efforts to negotiate a peaceful resolution proved unsuccessful, leading Sadat to consider military options as a means of breaking the political stalemate. At the same time, Syria, under President Hafez al-Assad, aimed to recover the Golan Heights lost in 1967. Egypt and Syria began coordinating their military strategies, recognizing that a joint effort would increase their chances of success.

By 1973, the situation had reached a critical point. Arab states, particularly Egypt and Syria, were determined to challenge Israeli dominance and alter the status quo established after 1967. Israel, on the other hand, remained confident in its military superiority and was reluctant to make territorial concessions without guarantees of lasting peace. Intelligence assessments within Israel underestimated the likelihood of a coordinated Arab attack, contributing to a sense of complacency.

The choice of timing for the attack was highly strategic. Egypt and Syria planned to launch their offensive on 6 October 1973, coinciding with Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, when much of Israel would be at a standstill. The attack also occurred during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, adding symbolic significance for Arab forces. The element of surprise was a crucial component of the plan, aimed at offsetting Israel's military advantages.

On the eve of the war, the Middle East stood on the brink of another major conflict. Diplomatic efforts had failed to resolve the core issues of territorial occupation, national identity, and regional security. The legacy of previous wars, combined with ongoing political and military tensions, created an environment in which war became increasingly likely. The coordinated preparations by Egypt and Syria, along with Israel's underestimation of the threat, set the stage for the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War.

PREVIOUS WARS

The First Arab - Israeli War (1948 - 1949)

The Arab-Israeli War of 1948 marked the beginning of open military conflict between the newly declared state of Israel and its Arab neighbours. The war broke out immediately after Israel declared independence on May 14, 1948, following the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine. This UN plan had proposed dividing British-controlled Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, but while Jewish leaders accepted it, Arab leaders rejected it, arguing it unfairly allocated land and ignored the wishes of the Arab majority population.

The conflict unfolded in two main phases. The first phase, before Israel's declaration of independence, involved civil war between Jewish and Arab communities within Palestine. The second phase began when neighbouring Arab states including Egypt, Transjordan (Jordan), Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon launched a coordinated invasion. Their objective was to prevent the establishment of Israel and support Palestinian Arabs. However, despite being initially outnumbered, Israeli forces were better organized and gradually gained the upper hand.

By the end of the war in 1949, Israel had not only survived but expanded its territory beyond what had been allocated under the UN plan. Egypt took control of the Gaza Strip, while Jordan annexed the West Bank and East Jerusalem. One of the most lasting consequences of the war was the displacement of approximately 700,000 Palestinians, creating a refugee crisis that remains unresolved to this day. This event, known as the Nakba in Arab memory, became a central grievance in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The war ended with armistice agreements rather than peace treaties, meaning that the fundamental issues territorial disputes, Palestinian statehood, and mutual recognition remained unresolved. The absence of a political settlement ensured that tensions would persist, laying the groundwork for future conflicts. The 1948 war established a pattern that would define the region: cycles of war followed by incomplete diplomatic outcomes.

The Suez Crisis (1956)

The Suez Crisis represented a significant escalation in the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as a broader geopolitical confrontation involving major world powers. The crisis began when Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal in July 1956, which had previously been controlled by British and French interests. This move was seen as a direct challenge to Western influence in the region.

In response, Britain and France secretly coordinated with Israel to launch a military operation against Egypt. Israel's role was to invade the Sinai Peninsula, providing a pretext for British and French intervention under the guise of protecting the canal. Israeli forces advanced rapidly, achieving significant military success and reaching the eastern bank of the Suez Canal within days. However, despite these battlefield victories, the operation quickly turned into a political failure. Both the United States and the Soviet Union opposed the invasion, albeit for different reasons. Under intense international pressure, particularly from the United States, Britain, France, and Israel were forced to withdraw their forces. A United Nations peacekeeping force was deployed to the region, marking one of the first major uses of UN peacekeepers.

The Suez Crisis had several important consequences. For Israel, it demonstrated its military capability but also highlighted its dependence on international support. For Egypt, the crisis was a political victory, as Nasser emerged as a hero of Arab nationalism despite the military setbacks. Most importantly, the crisis did not resolve underlying tensions between Israel and its neighbours. Issues such as freedom of navigation, border security, and recognition remained contentious, ensuring that the conflict would continue.

The Six-Day War (1967)

The Six-Day War is the single most important event in understanding the Yom Kippur War, as it fundamentally reshaped the political, territorial, and psychological landscape of the Middle East. The war took place in June 1967 and involved Israel fighting a coalition of Arab states, primarily Egypt, Syria, and Jordan.

The origins of the war lay in escalating tensions throughout the mid-1960s. Border clashes between Israel and Syria increased, while Palestinian guerrilla activities intensified. Egyptian President Nasser took a series of provocative actions, including expelling UN peacekeeping forces from the Sinai Peninsula and closing the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping an act Israel considered a *casus bello* (justification for war). Arab rhetoric also became increasingly aggressive, with calls for the destruction of Israel. In response, Israel launched a pre-emptive strike on June 5, 1967. The Israeli Air Force carried out a devastating attack on Egyptian airbases, destroying much of Egypt's air force on the ground within hours. This gave Israel immediate air superiority, which proved decisive in the conflict. Israeli forces then advanced rapidly on multiple fronts.

In the Sinai Peninsula, Israeli troops pushed Egyptian forces back to the Suez Canal within days. On the eastern front, Israel captured the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, including significant religious and political sites. In the north, Israeli forces seized the strategically important Golan Heights from Syria. By the end of the war, which lasted just six days, Israel had achieved a decisive and overwhelming victory. The consequences of the Six-Day War were profound and long-lasting. Israel's territory more than tripled, and it gained control over millions of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This created a new and highly complex dimension to the conflict, as questions of occupation, governance, and Palestinian self-determination became central issues.

For the Arab states, the defeat was deeply humiliating and led to a crisis of confidence. In response, Arab leaders met at the Khartoum Conference in 1967 and adopted the famous "Three No's": no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel. This stance effectively froze diplomatic progress and ensured that tensions would remain high. Perhaps the most important outcome of the Six-Day War was the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242. This resolution called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from territories occupied during the war and the recognition of every state's right to live in peace. However, the wording of the resolution was deliberately ambiguous, particularly regarding whether Israel was required to withdraw from "all" territories or just "some." This ambiguity allowed both sides to interpret the resolution in ways that suited their interests. This lack of clarity meant that the core issues remained unresolved. Israel was unwilling to withdraw without guarantees of security and recognition, while Arab states refused to recognize Israel without full withdrawal. As a result, the region entered a prolonged stalemate.

The Six-Day War also contributed directly to the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War in several key ways. First, the loss of the Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights became a primary motivation for Egypt and Syria to seek military solutions. Second, Israel's overwhelming victory led to a sense of overconfidence within its leadership and military, causing it to underestimate the capabilities and intentions of its adversaries. Third, the failure of diplomatic efforts following Resolution 242 convinced leaders like Anwar Sadat that war might be the only way to break the deadlock.

In essence, the Six-Day War did not resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict; instead, it transformed it into a more complex and entrenched struggle. The territorial changes, unresolved political questions, and psychological impact of the war created the exact conditions that would lead to the Yom Kippur War in 1973.

The War of Attrition (1969 - 1970)

The War of Attrition was a prolonged period of limited warfare between Egypt and Israel, primarily along the Suez Canal. Following the Six-Day War, Egypt sought to challenge Israeli control over the Sinai Peninsula without engaging in a full-scale war that it was unlikely to win.

Under Nasser, Egypt adopted a strategy of continuous pressure designed to wear down Israeli forces. This included artillery bombardments, commando raids, and air strikes. Israel responded with its own military actions, including deep-penetration bombing raids into Egyptian territory. The conflict also saw significant involvement from the Soviet Union, which provided military support to Egypt, including advanced air defence systems and personnel.

Despite the intensity of the fighting, neither side achieved a decisive victory. The war resulted in heavy casualties and economic strain for both countries. Eventually, a ceasefire was brokered in 1970 with the involvement of the United States.

The War of Attrition demonstrated that Israel's military superiority could be challenged, even if not defeated outright. For Egypt, it provided valuable military experience and highlighted the need for better planning and coordination in future conflicts. Importantly, it reinforced the idea that a limited war strategy rather than an all-out confrontation could be used to achieve political objectives.

SCENARIO AS OF FREEZE DATE

The scenario as on the freeze date of 6th October 1973 can be divided into three major fronts in terms of action taken:

The Arab Republic of Egypt

4th October 1973

By the fourth of October 1973, Egypt had already completed almost all of its war deployment along the Suez Canal. Roughly 200,000–220,000 troops were positioned under the Second Army in the north and Third Army in the south, backed by approximately 1,000–1,200 tanks held slightly to the rear for exploitation after the initial assault. Along the immediate canal edge, tens of thousands of infantries drawn from these formations are already sitting in forward assault positions, in many cases within a few hundred meters of Israeli strongpoints.

Artillery is already laid out in front of them numbering in the thousands of weapons (roughly 2,000+ guns and mortars), each assigned pre-calculated firing data on Israeli strongpoints. Nothing is being improvised at this stage targets have already been measured, ranges calculated, and firing sequences rehearsed repeatedly in prior weeks.

The most telling physical preparation is engineering. Egyptian forces have deployed dozens of high-pressure water pump systems, each capable of cutting through the massive Israeli sand embankments lining the east bank of the canal. These are not in storage they are physically emplaced near the canal and connected to intake points. Alongside them, pontoon bridge segments and ferry systems are staged within short movement distance, meaning bridging operations can begin within hours of an assault, not days.

Behind all this sits a dense surface-to-air missile network, including SA-2, SA-3, and the more mobile SA-6 systems. These are arranged in overlapping belts west of the canal, forming a continuous coverage zone designed to prevent Israeli aircraft from operating freely over the crossing sites.

By the end of 4 October, Egyptian forces are no longer manoeuvring in any significant way. Units are stationary, commanders are in forward command posts, and communications are tightly controlled. The army is effectively frozen in a launch posture waiting only for the final order.

5th October 1973

On 5 October, Egyptian activity became even more precise but not more visible. There is no dramatic movement that would signal war externally, but internally, positions are refined to exact execution points. Infantry units shifted from general staging areas into specific crossing sectors; each battalion assigned a defined stretch of canal and a timetable measured in minutes. The number of troops designated for the initial assault wave is approximately 30,000–40,000 soldiers, tasked with crossing in the first hours.

Bridging equipment is moved closer to the waterline, often under concealment. Engineers finalize placement of water pumps directly opposite Israeli embankments they are assigned to breach. Artillery crews conduct final checks firing data is already set, so no ranging shots are needed. Ammunition stockpiles are distributed forward so that sustained fire can be delivered without resupply delays.

Coordination with Syria is finalized in timing terms. The attack is not just planned it is synchronized down to the hour to ensure that Israeli forces cannot shift reserves between fronts.

By nightfall on 5 October, Egyptian forces were completely static. Soldiers are in position, many already in full combat gear, weapons loaded, equipment laid out for immediate movement. There are no further large-scale adjustments left to make. The system is waiting.

6th October 1973

It was the day of Yom-Kippur - the holiest day in the calendar of the Jews. At approximately 1400 hours, Egyptian forces initiate the operation. The opening action is a massive artillery barrage delivered by roughly 2,000 guns and mortars, firing thousands of shells in a short, concentrated period across the entire canal front. Israeli strongpoints, communication trenches, and rear supply areas are all targeted simultaneously. The intention is not prolonged bombardment but immediate disruption.

Within minutes of the barrage beginning, the first wave of infantry tens of thousands of soldiers moves to the canal and begins crossing in rubber assault boats and small craft. Crossings occur at dozens of points simultaneously, preventing Israeli defenders from concentrating fire. Within the first hour, Egyptian troops are already landing on the east bank and moving toward Israeli positions.

Almost immediately, engineering units activate the water pumps. High-pressure jets cut into the sand embankments, and within a relatively short time, multiple breaches are opened wide enough for vehicles to pass through. This is a critical transition point from infantry foothold to mechanized expansion.

At the same time, bridging operations begin. Pontoon bridge segments are brought forward and assembled on the canal under covering fire. Ferries begin transporting heavier equipment, including anti-tank weapons and eventually tanks.

Egyptian infantry on the east bank deploys anti-tank guided missiles and rocket-propelled grenades in large numbers. These are used against Israeli armoured vehicles attempting to respond from rear positions. The combination of infantry saturation and anti-tank capability slows Israeli counteraction.

By the end of 6 October, Egyptian forces had successfully established multiple bridgeheads across the canal, and a continuous flow of troops and equipment was moving from west to east. The crossing is no longer tentative it is sustained.

The Syrian Arab Republic

4th October 1973

Syria concentrated a sizable offensive force along the Golan Heights front on October 4. This force included more than 100,000 soldiers divided in multiple divisions along with approximately 1200-1400 tanks. These forces were positioned forward in dense formations which allows for quick attack rather than in depth, as would be expected for Defence.

Artillery assets, hundreds in number, are positioned within range of Israeli lines and are pre-calibrated such that firing data has already been calculated, which allows immediate and accurate bombardment- only awaiting order.

There isn't as much movement as there was in previous weeks. Tanks are already positioned in forward staging areas, frequently hidden but near the departure line. Armoured advances are followed by infantry units. The formation as a whole is positioned across several sectors, suggesting a wide-front attack as opposed to a focused probe.

By the end of the day, Syrian forces are fully deployed and require no additional manoeuvring to begin offensive operations.

5th October 1973

Syrian forces finalized their positions on October 5. Tank units align themselves for a coordinated advance across the Golan plateau by moving into precise attack lanes. To maintain initial operations, crews stay in their vehicles and logistical support components are brought forward.

In order to ensure that Israeli defensive positions, known tank emplacements, and communication points can be hit as soon as firing starts, artillery units finalize targeting data. The confirmation of coordination with Egypt guarantees the simultaneous ignition of both fronts.

6th October 1973

At around 1400 hours on the holy day of the Jews, Syrian artillery opened fire on the entire Golan front, in complete co-ordination with Egypt. Israeli defence positions are targeted, particularly known tank positions and command posts. Hundreds of guns delivered a concentrated barrage on these targets.

Syrian armoured formations begin to move forward immediately after the artillery strike. Instead of concentrating on a single breakthrough point, the attack spreads across several axes concurrently with the commitment of more than 1,000 tanks. The tanks are followed by infantry units that are ready to take ground and confront Israeli defenders.

The approximately 170-180 tanks which made up the Israeli defence were widely dispersed over a broad defensive front. This resulted in the Syrian units greatly outnumbering the Israeli defenders.

Engagement begins quickly. Tank battles occur at relatively close ranges, and Israeli units are forced into immediate defensive action without the benefit of reserve reinforcement, which has not yet fully arrived.

By the end of 6 October, Syrian forces had advanced into parts of the Golan Heights and were engaged in continuous combat with Israeli units. The advance is active but contested movement is ongoing, not concluded.

The State of Israel

4th October 1973

Israel maintained a comparatively light forward deployment on October 4. The Bar-Lev Line is made up of about 16–18 fortified strongpoints along the Suez Canal, each with 15–30 soldiers stationed there, for a total of about 450–500 troops directly on the canal line. There are a few, but not many, armoured units behind them.

Israeli forces are dispersed across a broad defensive front on the Golan Heights, with about 170–180 tanks and a few infantry units. This deployment leaves little immediate reserve strength as coverage is prioritized over depth.

At the national level, civilian mobility is decreasing and regular activities are gradually slowing down as the nation prepares to observe Yom Kippur. Military posture is unaltered in spite of this.

Reports of deployments from Egypt and Syria, as well as the evacuation of Soviet personnel from both countries, are reaching Israeli intelligence. On this day, however, no complete mobilization is mandated. The standard alert posture is maintained by the forces.

5th October 1973

On October 5, civilian life in Israel drastically slows down as Yom Kippur conditions fully take hold. There are less public engagement, communication, and transportation, and many soldiers are not in their units.

Egyptian and Syrian forces are in forward positions, with armoured formations near the Golan front and bridging equipment visible near the canal, according to Israeli intelligence. The Israeli command structure discusses mobilization, but for the majority of the day, no full call-up is carried out.

A few minor changes are made. Though not enough to drastically change the balance, more armoured units start to advance toward the Golan Heights, slightly boosting defensive strength there. Aircraft are ready for quick deployment if needed, and the air force is on heightened readiness.

By the end of 5 October, Israeli forces remain largely in their existing positions, with reserves not yet fully mobilized and a significant portion of national manpower not yet assembled.

6th October 1973

Israeli tank units (roughly 170–180 tanks) battle advancing Syrian armoured formations (more than 1,000 tanks) on the Golan Heights. Israeli units are compelled to engage in defensive combat without full reinforcement as engagements start right away across several sectors. Early in the conflict, the Israeli Air Force is sent in, responding to both fronts with sorties. However, Egyptian and Syrian surface-to-air missile systems pose a serious threat to operations, limiting freedom of action and decreasing operational efficacy. The Israeli government orders full reserve mobilisation after the extent of the attack is confirmed. This starts a quick national process wherein forces assemble and are deployed toward both fronts, even though these facilities are not imminently available

By the end of 6 October, Israeli forces are fully engaged in active combat on both fronts, with frontline forces under pressure and reserve forces in the process of mobilization and moving towards the battlefield.

Delegates, as 6th October 1973 comes to a close in the Yom Kippur War, the situation on the ground is still unfolding, with active combat continuing across both major fronts.

Egypt has carried out crossings of the Suez Canal at multiple locations. Bridgeheads have been established on the eastern bank, and engineering units have already opened breaches in the sand embankments. Bridging equipment is in operation, allowing a steady movement of personnel, anti-tank teams, and armoured units across the canal. Deployment east of the canal is ongoing, with forces continuing to move in.

On the northern front, Syria has launched its offensive across the Golan Heights. Armoured and infantry formations have moved forward beyond their initial positions and are now engaged with Israeli forces across several sectors. Fighting is taking place simultaneously in multiple areas, with units in direct contact.

Israel is engaged on both fronts at the same time. Along the Suez Canal, forward positions are under pressure, and communication between some strongpoints has been disrupted. In the Golan Heights, Israeli armoured units are actively engaged in defensive combat against advancing forces.

A full reserve mobilization has been ordered in Israel. Personnel are being called up and moved toward the fronts, though these reinforcements are still in the process of arriving and deploying.

Air activity is ongoing. Aircrafts are being deployed, but operations are taking place in an environment where surface-to-air missile systems and air defences are active on both fronts. There is no ceasefire in place, and no disengagement of forces has occurred. Forces are in motion, engaging and reinforcing positions while combat continues.

FOREIGN INFLUENCE

As of the freeze date, as the Yom-Kippur war commences, the response, on an international level, is still taking shape. Nothing as such is fully structured as of yet while governments are reacting quickly, but carefully. They are trying to comprehend not just what is happening but also what could take place upon further escalation of the conflict.

The United States of America (USA)

The role of the United States in the conflict was decisive, both militarily and politically, primarily through its unwavering support for Israel. By 1973, the United States had already established itself as Israel's principal ally, supplying advanced weaponry, financial aid, and diplomatic backing. This support was rooted in Cold War strategy, where maintaining Israeli military superiority was seen as essential to counter Soviet influence in the Middle East.

In terms of military assistance, the United States had, since the 1960s, supplied Israel with modern aircraft such as F-4 Phantom jets, advanced radar systems, artillery, and armoured equipment. Although large-scale resupply operations like the later "Operation Nickel Grass" occur after the war begins, the pre-war military balance was already heavily influenced by consistent American aid. This gave Israel a qualitative military edge over Arab force.

Politically, the United States acted as a key diplomatic shield for Israel within the United Nations, often blocking or moderating resolutions critical of Israeli actions. Figures like Henry Kissinger played a central role in shaping policy, prioritizing stability and ensuring that Israel was not diplomatically isolated.

The Nixon Doctrine further shaped U.S. involvement. Instead of direct intervention, the U.S. strengthened regional allies such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, ensuring that pro-American influence remained dominant. However, in the Arab world, U.S. support for Israel especially during the Six-Day War was perceived as biased, contributing to resentment and indirectly motivating Arab states to seek military solutions.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R)

The Soviet Union played an equally critical role on the opposing side, acting as the primary military supplier and strategic backer of Egypt and Syria. Its involvement was driven by Cold War objectives: expanding influence in the Middle East and countering American dominance.

The USSR supplied vast quantities of military hardware to Arab states, including MiG fighter jets, T-55 and T-62 tanks, artillery systems, and most importantly, advanced surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems such as the SA-2, SA-3, and SA-6. These SAM systems were crucial in limiting Israeli air superiority, which had been a decisive factor in 1967. The Soviet Union also provided anti-tank guided missiles like the AT-3 Sagger, which proved highly effective against Israeli armoured units.

Beyond equipment, Soviet involvement extended to training, planning, and even direct personnel deployment. During the War of Attrition, thousands of Soviet advisors and technicians were stationed in Egypt, operating air defence systems and assisting in rebuilding Arab military capacity after 1967.

Strategically, the USSR also secured naval and logistical footholds in the region, such as bases in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. However, despite its support, the Soviet Union remained cautious about full-scale war, as it did not want direct confrontation with the United States. This created a paradox where it enabled Arab military strength while simultaneously attempting to limit escalation.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK)

The United Kingdom had a historically significant but relatively restrained role by 1973. Its earlier influence in the Middle East—through agreements like the Sykes-Picot Agreement—had already shaped the geopolitical landscape and contributed to long-term instability and distrust toward Western powers.

During the Suez Crisis of 1956, the UK had directly collaborated with Israel and France in military action against Egypt, reinforcing perceptions of Western interventionism. However, by 1973, Britain had shifted toward a more diplomatic approach, aligning broadly with U.S. policy but avoiding direct military involvement.

One of its most significant contributions was diplomatic, particularly through its role in drafting United Nations Resolution 242. The UK advocated for a negotiated settlement based on land-for-peace principles. At the outbreak of the war, Britain primarily called for restraint and ceasefire, reflecting its reduced military role but continued diplomatic engagement.

People's Republic of China

The China had a more limited but ideologically significant role. China positioned itself as an anti-imperialist power and strongly supported Arab states politically. It condemned Zionism and consistently advocated for Palestinian self-determination in international forums.

China provided limited military and economic aid, but its primary contribution was symbolic and diplomatic. By supporting Egypt and Syria, China aligned itself with the broader anti-Western bloc, reinforcing its global image as a supporter of developing nations and liberation movements.

The French Republic

France's role evolved significantly over time. Initially, France had been one of Israel's closest allies, supplying arms and assisting in the development of its nuclear capabilities, including cooperation on the Dimona reactor in the late 1950s. This support contributed to Israel's long-term strategic strength.

However, by the 1960s, under President Charles de Gaulle, France shifted toward a pro-Arab stance. Following the Six-Day War, France imposed an arms embargo on Israel and distanced itself from direct military involvement.

By 1973, France's influence was primarily diplomatic. It supported the implementation of Resolution 242 and advocated for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories. Unlike the United States, France attempted to maintain a more balanced position, seeking improved relations with Arab states, particularly for economic and energy-related reasons.

Regional Arab States (Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Algeria, Jordan)

Regional actors played a crucial supporting role, though their involvement varied in intensity.

Saudi Arabia provided strong political backing to Egypt and Syria and played a key role in coordinating Arab unity. While it did not initially engage militarily, its economic power—particularly oil—would soon become a major tool of influence (especially later during the oil embargo).

Iraq and Algeria were more aligned with active military and political support. Iraq, in particular, had strong ties with the Soviet Union and contributed to Arab military coordination, while Algeria consistently supported anti-Israel positions.

Jordan adopted a cautious stance. Although politically aligned with Arab states, it avoided immediate military involvement due to its vulnerable position and past experiences, especially after 1967.

INTERNATIONAL LAWS RELEVANT TO THE CONFLICT

The Charter of the United Nations (1945)

Article 2(3) - This Article dictates and establishes that all Member Nations shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice is not endangered. In other words, it is mentioned that in any case, disputes shall be settled with keeping in mind the fact to prevent any aggression or conflict between the Member States.

Article 2(4) - According to this article, the Member-States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations. This article prohibits the use of force or threat against any other Sovereign Member-State and calls for the Members to respect sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of other States.

Article 51 - This Article states that nothing in the United Nations Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. This article mandates that if a country violates the Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter by the usage of force or acts of aggression against another Member State, the victim State has the authority and right to self - defence until the Security Council has taken action any measure or action to restore International Peace and Security.

Geneva Convention (1949)

Convention I

The First Geneva Convention is based on the protection of the soldiers in **hors de combat** (out of the fight). It makes provisions such that all wounded personnel must be collected and provided medical care and treatment humanely, irrespective of which side they are fighting for. Another major provision of this convention is neutrality to the medical personnel and to all the medical facilities, ambulances and field hospitals.

Convention II

The Second Geneva Convention adapts the protections of the first to maritime warfare, specifically safeguarding wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea. It grants neutral status and protection to hospital ships, which must be clearly marked and cannot be used for military purposes. The treaty also protects medical transports, coastal rescue craft and religious or medical personnel serving at sea. The Second Geneva Convention derives the humanitarian laws from the First Convention and applies it to maritime conflict

Convention III

The Third Geneva Convention establishes the standards for the treatment of Prisoners of War (POWs). It mandates they be treated humanely, protected against violence or intimidation, and allowed to notify families. It prohibits torture and requires the POWs to only disclose their name, rank, date of birth, and serial number.

Convention IV

The Fourth Geneva Convention is the most important of the four Geneva Conventions. It states that civilians must be treated humanely and not be subjected to torture, assault, exploitation or genocide, in the case of a conflict or foreign occupation when they find themselves in the hands of a Party to the conflict of which they are not citizens of. It also prohibits mass deportation to the Occupying Power, both of its own citizens to the occupied region and the citizens of the occupied region to its sovereignly recognized territory. This convention also establishes that no destruction of property will be carried out except where destruction is absolutely necessary under military jurisdiction. The Convention also dictates to provide protection to vulnerable groups like children, elderly and women. The Occupying power can also not arrest or punish any protected person for an offence he or she has not committed.

Jus ad Bellum (Right to War)

Jus ad Bellum is the international law branch that defines the legal justifications for a State to initiate war or use armed force against another State(s). It focuses on certain criteria which define if the initiation of a war is justified or not.

PRINCIPLES:

- **Just Cause** - Under this principle, the State initiating the armed conflict or war must provide a justified reason which must coincide with the terms of either the Article 51 or Chapter VII (Security Council authorization), of the United Nations Charter.
- **Right Authority** - This principle of *Jus ad Bellum* establishes that the use of force can only be initiated by a Sovereign state or the Security Council. In other words, private individuals, rebel groups and militant organizations cannot resort to force against a Sovereign State.
- **Last Resort** - *Jus ad Bellum* defines that military force must only be used when diplomacy, mediation and sanctions have been exhausted and proven ineffective.
- **Proportionality of Ends** - The results of the war like liberty and peace must outweigh the expected death and destruction it will cause.
- **Reasonable Prospect of Success** - A State should not resort to war if the cause is hopeless and will only lead to senseless slaughter without a chance of achieving the objective.

Jus in Bello (Justice in War)

Jus in Bello refers to the part of International Law during any wars that governs how a war is physically conducted. It regulates the way that war is conducted. It seeks to minimize the suffering caused by war by providing protection and assistance to its victims. It addresses the grim reality of war without considering the reasons for or the legalities of the conflict. It applies irrespective of whether the reasons for the conflict or the cause upheld by either party in the conflict are just.

PRINCIPLES:

- **Discrimination** - The principle of Discrimination in *Jus in Bello* defines the legitimate targets in a war. It prohibits the intentional target of civilians. Residential areas, places of worship, schools and medical centres and facilities should be immune from attack. The attacking State has the right to attack legitimate military locations.
- **Proportionality** - The principle of proportionality concerns how much force is morally appropriate. Weapons must be used judiciously and as the situation be. Basically, excessive force must not be used to cause unnecessary suffering if the objective can be achieved using a lesser amount. Destruction and casualties must be reduced by as much as possible.

Geneva Convention on Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone (1958)

Article 14(4) - Passage is innocent so long as it is not prejudicial to the peace, good order or security of the Coastal State. Such passage shall take place in conformity with these articles and with other rules of international law. In other words, a Coastal State does have the right to suspend the transit of the vessels which may prove to be a threat to its internal and external peace and sovereignty. However, the Coastal State must provide justifications for the stoppage of transition.

Article 16(4) - There shall be no suspension of the innocent passage of foreign ships through straits which are used for international navigation between one part of the high seas and another part of the high seas or the territorial sea of a non-coastal State.

In other words, there shall be no suspension of innocent passage of the ships which are not in violation of the Article 14(4) of the Convention. Any Coastal State cannot suspend the right of transit even during an armed conflict or war for any State who is

neutral or non-participant in the particular conflict or war, both directly and indirectly. The ships of the neutral State must not carry weapons, troops or war supplies.

UNSC Resolution 242(1967)

In 1967, the passing of resolution 242 in the Security Council established and dictated the withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent war. The resolution involved the termination of all claims or states of belligerency and the acknowledgement of sovereignty and territorial and political independence of every State in the afflicted area.

TIMELINE

5th - 10th June, 1967: The Six-Day War concludes with a decisive Israeli victory. Israel captures the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Golan Heights. This creates the core territorial disputes that will directly lead to the 1973 war. Arab states suffer humiliation, while Israel gains strategic depth but also assumes control over large hostile populations.

19th June, 1967: The Israeli Cabinet secretly votes to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt and the Golan Heights to Syria in exchange for peace and demilitarization. However, this proposal is never formally communicated to Arab states. This represents a missed diplomatic opportunity, as neither side fully engages in negotiations at a critical early stage.

1st September, 1967: At the Khartoum Summit, Arab states adopt the “Three No’s” policy: no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel. This hardline stance shuts down immediate diplomatic possibilities and entrenches hostility on both sides.

22nd November, 1967: The United Nations passes Resolution 242, calling for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories in exchange for peace. However, ambiguity in wording (“withdrawal from territories” vs “all territories”) leads to irreconcilable interpretations, creating a diplomatic deadlock that persists into 1973.

1969 - 1970: The War of Attrition takes place along the Suez Canal. Egypt attempts to weaken Israeli control over Sinai through sustained military pressure. The war ends in stalemate but demonstrates that Israel can be challenged and that a limited war strategy might be effective.

28th September, 1970: Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser dies and is succeeded by Anwar Sadat. Sadat inherits a politically and economically strained Egypt and begins considering both diplomatic and military options to regain Sinai.

December 1970: Sadat signals a major policy shift in an interview, stating willingness to recognize Israel in exchange for full withdrawal from Sinai. This is one of the first public indications of Arab willingness to compromise, though it is conditional.

4th February, 1971: Sadat formally proposes a peace initiative to the Egyptian National Assembly, offering recognition of Israel if it withdraws from the Sinai Peninsula and other occupied territories. This marks a significant diplomatic opening.

8th February, 1971: Swedish diplomat Gunnar Jarring presents an UN-backed peace initiative based on Resolution 242. Egypt responds positively, indicating willingness to reach a settlement. This is the closest moment to peace before 1973.

February 1971 (Late): Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir forms a committee to evaluate the proposal. The committee surprisingly supports significant territorial concessions, including withdrawal from Sinai.

1971 (Shortly After): Meir rejects and shelves the proposal, angered by its implications. Israel instead offers only partial withdrawal and refuses to return to pre-1967 borders. This decision is viewed by many, including the United States, as a missed opportunity for peace.

26th February, 1971: Israel formally responds to the Jarring Plan, stating it will not withdraw to pre-1967 borders, citing security concerns. This effectively collapses the diplomatic initiative.

1971 - 1972: The United States, led by figures like Henry Kissinger, prioritizes maintaining Israel's military superiority as part of Cold War strategy. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union continues supporting Egypt and Syria. The conflict becomes deeply embedded in Cold War geopolitics.

24th October, 1972: Sadat meets with Egypt's Supreme Council of the Armed Forces and declares his intention to go to war, even without full Soviet backing. This marks a decisive shift from diplomacy to military planning.

1972 (Throughout the Year): Egypt undertakes major military reforms, replacing ineffective commanders from 1967, adopting Soviet military doctrine, and acquiring advanced weapons such as surface-to-air missiles and anti-tank systems. This prepares Egypt for a limited but effective offensive strategy.

1972: Sadat expels Soviet advisors publicly, creating the impression of distancing from the USSR. However, military cooperation continues indirectly. This move also signals to the United States that Egypt is open to shifting alliances.

Early 1973: Egypt and Syria finalize plans for a coordinated attack on Israel. Their strategy is not to destroy Israel but to achieve limited gains that force international negotiations.

February 1973: Sadat makes a final diplomatic overture through backchannels to the United States, proposing Israeli withdrawal from Sinai. The proposal is conveyed to Israel but rejected. This is effectively the last chance for peaceful resolution before war.

May 1973: Egyptian and Syrian forces begin large-scale military exercises near Israeli borders. Israeli intelligence detects these movements and initiates a partial mobilization ("Blue-White Alert"), which proves costly. When no attack follows, Israeli leadership begins to assume such movements are merely exercises this becomes a critical intelligence miscalculation later.

June 1973: Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev warns that failure to resolve tensions could lead to war, indicating that even the USSR cannot restrain Egypt indefinitely.

September 1973 (Early): Syria mobilizes troops near the Golan Heights, while Egypt increases activity near the Suez Canal. Israeli intelligence notices but dismisses the threat due to the belief that Egypt will not attack without achieving full air superiority.

25th September, 1973: King Hussein of Jordan secretly meets Golda Meir in Tel Aviv and warns her of an impending joint Arab attack. This is one of the most direct and credible warnings Israel receives, but it is ultimately downplayed by Israeli intelligence.

Late September 1973: Israel receives multiple intelligence warnings (over 10) suggesting war is imminent. However, Mossad leadership maintains that Arab states are not prepared for war. This reflects a systemic intelligence failure rooted in overconfidence after 1967.

27th - 30th September, 1973: Egypt calls up reservists under the pretext of military exercises. These troop movements are observed but again interpreted as routine drills.

4th October, 1973: Egypt publicly announces the demobilization of some reservists to reduce Israeli suspicion. This deception successfully convinces Israeli leadership that tensions are decreasing.

4th - 5th October, 1973: Soviet advisors and their families evacuate Egypt and Syria. This is a major warning sign of impending war, but Israel still does not fully mobilize.

Night of 5th October, 1973: Egyptian informant Ashraf Marwan warns Israel of an imminent attack, though he incorrectly states the timing as sunset the next day. This finally triggers partial Israeli mobilization, but crucial hours are lost.

Morning of 6th October, 1973: Israeli leadership debates launching a pre-emptive strike. Military leaders support it, but Prime Minister Golda Meir rejects the option to ensure continued support from the United States, prioritizing diplomacy over immediate military advantage.

6th October, 1973 (Hours Before War): Israel begins partial mobilization of reserves but remains strategically unprepared. Arab forces are already in position for attack.

PAPERWORK GUIDE

All paperwork is to be sent to the committee email ID:

unhga.specpol.lmcmun@gmail.com

The standard font for all committee paperwork must be Times New Roman and font size must be 12.

The committee will accept two pre-committee paperwork (this includes communiques, presidential statements, Memorandum of Understandings, treaties, etc.), and the communication lines for the same will close on 12th May at 11:59 p.m.

The accepted paperwork the UNHGA-SPECPOL committee is the following:

- Position Paper
- Presidential Statement
- Communique
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Action Order
- Working Paper
- Draft Resolutions

For details and specifics regarding different forms of paperwork, delegates are to refer to the conference handbook. The following are certain committee-specific recommendations for the same.

Position Paper

The position paper holds immense significance as it is the first piece of paperwork which any delegate needs to send. It encompasses and contains all the extensive research done by a delegate, their policy and the solutions that they have thought of. The first time the executive board analyses every delegate is through the position paper which needs to be sent prior to the committee. It is highly advisable to produce a high-quality position paper to have an excellent first impression before your executive board. A position paper consists primarily of three parts –

‘Statement of the Problem’, ‘Country Policy’ and ‘Solutions’.

Statement of the Problem

The first section of the position paper entails the agenda itself, explained through a neutral perspective. It contains the history of the problem, the possible causes and current State of the crisis or the problem. It is a representation of the delegate's comprehension of the agenda and the problem while also giving a first glimpse of the depth of the delegate's research. It is advisable to keep this part brief and only include the most important aspects in the view of the delegate.

Country Policy

The second part of the position paper is country specific and includes how each individual country views the agenda, their involvement in the crisis and the stance that the delegate will be taking in committee in accordance with the country's foreign policy. It also elaborates on the country's history in regard to the agenda, the past actions (if any) taken by the country and how the crisis presently affects the country. Any conventions, treaties or organizations created or supported by the country along with any action taken with international organizations particularly the United Nations must also be enlisted here.

Solutions

The most vital part of the position paper is the solutions section which is again delegate specific and not generic in nature. It should include unique and viable solutions which can be pitched in committee and those that can be accepted by the international community. All potential solutions listed by the delegate in this section must be in compliance with their foreign policy. It is advised that every delegate takes into consideration their country's advantage while proposing these solutions.

Delegates are also advised to include citations in their position papers.

Sample Position Paper: [Position Paper](#)

NOTE: THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF POSITION PAPERS IS THE 8th OF MAY, 2025. It is strongly advised that the delegates keep the content of their position papers under 4 pages.

Communique

The dynamism of the committee must have become evident by now having read and understood the agenda and the various aspects that it holds. In a committee like this which is characterized by a lot of complexities and crises, a quintessential tool which we expect all delegates to use is – communique.

A communique is written by the delegate representing the country used to contact entities outside of your committee in order to involve them with the crisis in a certain way. They are written as formal correspondence to outside actors as a way of enticing them to take action, even though they aren't under your direct control. These communiques are essentially used to take executive action either openly or covertly. However, this document requires a fair share of key points to be fulfilled. The communique should be realistic and naturally viable, they should be ordinarily

highly detailed with pain-stricken attention to details, a covert communique need not follow international rules and regulations. Essentially a communique is one of the strongest ways in which a delegate can express their creativity in committee.

Another indispensable feature of a communique is that it can be used as a response to updates given in committee. Delegates can create a series of inter-related communiques in order to achieve a particular objective as well. All communiques, however, are subject to ratification by the executive board before it can be considered viable enough in committee. Communiques can primarily be distinguished on the basis of accessibility and number of authors.

On the Basis of Accessibility

Public Communique – These communiques are open to the entire committee and all delegates will know which country is behind the action that has taken place in the communique. This type must be used if a delegate is interested in making the entire committee aware of an action that he has taken. It is advisable to only include those actions which can be internationally accepted, not subject to criticism and judicially mandated.

Private Communique – These communiques, otherwise known as covert communiques, are essential to take secretive action and only the delegate(s) who has sent it will be aware of it. These communiques can be used effectively as a response to updates given by the executive board or to carry out actions which are not internationally warranted. It can also be used to connect to government officers or other entities not in the committee. These communiques are also subject to ratification

by the executive board before it can be brought up in any way in the committee. Moreover, the executive board also has the right to give the contents of the communique as an update in committee with or without altering some contents.

On the Basis of Number of Authors

Individual Communique – This type of communique is written by an individual (one) delegate or delegation and only they are aware of its contents and intentions.

Joint Communique – This type of communique is written by two or more delegates present in committee together. This can only be the result of a symbiotic benefit where both the delegates agree upon a common cause or objective and both benefit from the success of that particular action.

Note: A communique must contain the type of communique (Private, Public, Joint Private, Joint Public), A “From:” portion (Name of Delegate sending it), “To:” portion (Recipient of Communique) and a few lines containing a brief summary of the entire communique. (All these are to be present on the first page). The delegate can then move into the details of the communique. It is highly advisable to keep the communique reasonably short around 6-7 pages at most.

Sample Public Communique: [Public Communique](#)

Sample Private Communique: [Private Communique](#)

Action Order

An action order in an MUN is a paperwork that stands for collective action undertaken by a single nation or a group of nations. This is often seen in crisis committees as they are used for strategic planning of military attacks. Action Orders are often ‘pitted’ against each other and the paperwork that is more detailed and feasible is usually ratified. It is ratified by the Executive board and is oftentimes introduced as an update.

Sample Action Order: [Action Order](#)

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in international forums is a non-binding agreement between States or international organizations that outlines mutual intentions, goals, or frameworks for cooperation. While it lacks the legal enforceability of a treaty, an MOU often serves as a foundational step for future binding commitments. In global forums, MOUs are commonly used to promote diplomatic dialogue, enhance collaboration on issues like trade, security, or development, and formalize partnerships without the need for ratification.

Sample Memorandum of Understanding: [Memorandum of Understanding](#)

Presidential Statement

A presidential Statement is an executive order issued by the Head of State. It is primarily used to announce a change or diversion from the normal foreign policy of a country that the delegate wishes the entire committee to know. It is also very important to not abuse the powers of a Presidential Statement. Any such paperwork which does not affect the immediate flow of the committee or that which does not reflect a change in policy will not be ratified.

Sample Presidential Statement: [Presidential Statement](#)

Working Paper

A working paper is a precursor to the Draft Resolution. It is mainly a loosely formatted document that has recommendations to the committee or solutions for the given agenda that the authors feel should be implemented. A working paper is generally not formally voted upon (informal voting) and serves as a way of foreshadowing the solutions to be present in the end paperwork, i.e., the draft resolution.

Draft Resolution

Draft Resolution is a formal document that specifies a plan of action that is to be undertaken by the United Nations Security Council to address a crisis. The Draft Resolution has an extremely strict format and not adhering to the format can get the resolution scrapped. A Draft resolution starts with a “name” or “title”, followed by the names of the authors, then the signatories (delegates who wish for the resolution to be

discussed in committee, not necessarily side with it) and finally enters the main body of the resolution.

The main body of the resolution can also be subdivided into two parts, first are the preambulatory clauses [separator to be used is “,”] and then the operative clauses [separator to be used is “;”]. Further, a full stop [.] signifies the end of the draft resolution.

Authors: They are the members or countries who wish to introduce the paperwork written by them.

Signatories: Are the members that want the paperwork to be discussed in committee. Being a signatory does not imply that the member supports the resolution.

Phrases: Phrases are what we start clauses with. Preambulatory Phrases are phrases [have to be italicized] to start a preambulatory clause; Operative Phrase [have to be underlined] is to begin an operative clause.

Please check the Conference Handbook for the list of phrases that will be accepted.

Note: Refer to the Conference Handbook for more information regarding Working Papers, Draft Resolutions, and the samples of the same.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Delegates of this committee are suggested to be prepared for a fast-paced update driven committee. The Executive Board would look forward to arguments based on international law and delegates must maintain strict adherence to foreign policy, as it is a simulation of a United Nations committee. Deviation from foreign policy will be looked down upon by the Executive Board.

Each delegate must always keep in mind the freeze date. Developments up to this date – including political transitions, regional alliances, ongoing conflicts, and ideological movements – should form the foundation of arguments and proposed actions. While quoting law and charters, it must be noted that only international law prior to the freeze date will be taken into consideration.

The Executive Board also recommends the delegates to approach the committee with realism and foresight. While respecting national sovereignty and regional autonomy, the delegates should engage with a forward-looking perspective. Consider how instability or revolutionary movements if left unchecked may not only have a regional impact but also threaten international stability.

Delegates should also be well versed with the mandate and the concept of a deadlock in the Security Council. While this committee is *prima facie* a SPECPOL, the precarious situation in the Middle East may require decisions that require the committee to take up a more diverse role.

Delegates are expected to send logical and realistic paperwork. While the bar for creativity is limitless, delegates must ensure their ideas can be carried out with the technology that exists as per the freeze date. Delegates must ensure that the paperwork they submit is relevant to the updates given on that day of the committee.

To all the first timers and people who are relatively new, we understand that this may seem daunting and overwhelming. The Executive Board will try its best to explain everything as and when they come up in committee. For the more experienced delegates the above recommendations may be known to you all.

However, one thing is for sure: embracing these "tips" will be sure to separate the best delegate from the rest.

QUESTIONS FOR COMMITTEE

- 1) Should the committee call for an immediate ceasefire in the Yom Kippur War, or allow limited military engagement to continue?
- 2) How should Israel respond to the surprise attack while maintaining international support?
- 3) What role should the United Nations play in managing and enforcing a ceasefire?
- 4) How can escalation into a larger regional or superpower conflict be prevented?
- 5) To what extent should Israel withdraw from territories occupied after the Six-Day War?
- 6) How should United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 be interpreted and implemented?
- 7) How can Israel's security concerns be balanced with the sovereignty of Arab states?
- 8) Should recognition of Israel's right to exist come before or after territorial withdrawal?
- 9) Was the use of force in the Yom Kippur War justified as a means to break diplomatic deadlock?
- 10) What role should superpowers play in resolving the conflict, and should their involvement be limited?
- 11) What mechanisms can be established to prevent future wars in the region?
- 12) Why did diplomatic efforts between 1967 and 1973 fail, and how can future negotiations succeed?

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