GMUN 2020:

United Nations Security Council

UNSC Background Guide 2020: Peace and Security in Africa

Dear Delegates,

My name is Morgan Macdonald and I am so excited to be directing the Security Council at Glenlyon Norfolk Model United Nations 2020! I am in grade 12 here at GNS, and I have been participating in MUN conferences since grade 8. I have attended over 10 conferences since my first experience at VYMUN in Whistler, where I was so nervous to speak that I spent the entirety of the 3 days writing notes to the Dias instead of raising my placard.

The UNSC is the highest-ranking committee of the United Nations. Even though we unfortunately cannot be together for in-person debate, I am confident that each and every GMUN delegate will leave with a valuable takeaway from the conference, whether it be a greater appreciation for diplomacy and current affairs, a heightened global understanding, or simply making some new connections with other youth.

I will be working alongside Calla Roberts, who is the UNSC Assistant Director. She is a grade 11 student at GNS, and I have no doubt that her passion for MUN will ensure that the UNSC will be a truly vibrant and engaging committee. I will also be working with my fellow classmate Dana Mavrow, who is going to be the UNSC chair this year. She is also a grade 12 student here at GNS, and I know that her amazing background in debate and Model UN will be of great value to the UNSC. Together, we hope to bring each and every one of you an engaging and invigorating Model UN experience!

Sincerely,
Morgan Macdonald (UNSC Director)
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Topic: Developing and implementing plans to respond to terrorist attacks on critical infrastructure

A Brief History of the Security Council

After the end of the Second World War, the United Nations was founded by the Allied Powers of WW1 to ensure global security. On January 17th, 1946, the Security Council held its first session at Church House, Westminster, London. Since its first meeting, the Security Council permanently resides at the United Nations headquarters in New York. The UNSC has also held sessions in Ethiopia, Panama, and Switzerland.

The primary responsibility of the Security Council is to maintain international peace and security. The UNSC is a 15-member council, with 5 permanent seats occupied by China, the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the Russian Federation. The other 10 seats are filled by non-permanent members, who are elected by the General Assembly for two years.

According to the United Nations Charter, the United Nations has four main purposes:

- to maintain international peace and security;
- to develop friendly relations among nations;
- to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights;
- and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

All members of the UN agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. While other organs of the United Nations can make recommendations to member states, only the Security Council has the authority to make decisions. Member states are then obligated to implement these decisions under the Charter.

Introduction to the Conflict

Africa has witnessed a trend of terrorist and violent extremist activity over the recent years, specifically within an area referred to as the Horn of Africa, which includes Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya. While the United Nations (UN) has not endorsed a specific definition of terrorism, the term generally denotes the use and/or threat of use of violence against civilians for the purposes of achieving political, ideological, economic, and/or social goals. The Security Council has categorized terrorism as one of the most significant threats to international peace and security. The Security Council has also recognized violent extremism as another significant threat that can lead to terrorism. Extremism is the belief in extreme ideologies, advocating for violence and a lack of tolerance, and can translate to terrorism if an individual acts on those beliefs. Violent extremist groups exploit and reinforce divisions among social groups and undermine the social contract between citizens and their governments.

There has been a continuous increase in terrorism and violent extremist activity in the region of Somalia. Al-Shabaab, a rising terrorist group that has been active since 2006, is the largest and most lethal terrorist organization in the region. With areas of operation in Somalia and northern Kenya, Al-Shabaab engages in open attacks against civilians, promotes youth radicalization, and encourages extremist ideologies. Al-Shabaab controls large areas of Somalia, enabling it to launch attacks in Kenya and Ethiopia, spreading terrorism and regional insecurity. Somalia has been labeled as a failed state due to piracy, economic stagnation, and vast human right violations. According to the Institute for Security Sciences, 40% of Al-Shabaab members are children or young adults between 15-19 years old. Youth radicalization has become an extreme issue that stems from the underdevelopment, ongoing civil strife, and natural calamities of Somalia.

The Security Council has taken a strong stand against terrorism in Africa through, among other areas of work, dispatching the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) to assist the African Union (AU) with security, peacebuilding, and humanitarian issues. Through its work with the Somalian government and civil society organizations, UNSOM forces are gaining the trust of the local population. UNSOM, the AU Mission in Somalia along with military campaigns led by the United States, Ethiopia, and Kenya, have led to Al-Shabaab retreating and subsequently launching guerrilla warfare tactics. Somalia established a provisional government with the aim of strengthening stability and addressing regional terrorism and violent extremism. The lack of effective regional collaboration to combat terrorism and its root causes has resulted in a deterioration of security, the rise of terrorist and extremist groups, and the increased radicalization of young people.

Border safety (the protection of borders from the illegal movement of weapons, drugs, contraband, and human trafficking) continues to pose as a threat, consistently worsening throughout the region, leading to greater militarization of African States. The increases in military presence have created a security dilemma in a region where terrorism and violent extremism already pose a threat. Focusing on the causes of instability, such as youth radicalization, underdevelopment, and the financing of terrorist groups, will enable international support to successfully prevent developments in terrorist activities and extremism in Africa. The

overall stability of the region remains a concern for the international community and requires further steps to be taken in order to mitigate impending risks.

Past international cooperation efforts have focused on sharing information, crisis management, and joint exercises. International law enforcement and judicial cooperation in criminal matters are crucial areas that must be strengthened in order to respond to terrorist attacks targeting critical infrastructure. The safety of young individuals in Africa must be ensured, and strengthening UN forces in the Horn of Africa will enable greater capability and protection for communities in the region, effectively safeguarding youth who are susceptible to recruitment. Ensuring regional trade, increasing the safety and resiliency of communities, and empowering civil society, are vital components in the effort to empower youth in the Horn of Africa.

Key Players

United States of America

With a deadly matrix of Islamist fighters causing an onslaught of terrorist attacks throughout West Africa, the United States has been pulling their support for Africa, with President Donald Trump bringing home hundreds of American troops and commandos. However, as Africa becomes more desperate for international support, especially in the Horn of Africa,

Tunisia

Tunisia has worked alongside other African countries, including Niger and South Africa, to emphasize the exploitation of local differences and grievances that result from terrorism. Tunisia's Security Council representative claims that foreign terrorists are often drawn to attacking conflict zones where government presence is weak.

The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has taken a less militarized approach than the United States to help combat terrorism in the Horn of Africa. In March 2020, Ambassador Jonathan Allen, UK Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, made a statement at the Security Council debate on peace and security in Africa. He stressed the value of the United Kingdom's international and regional cooperation in identifying terrorist threats, strengthening responses, and ensuring that these align with international norms and standards.

Timeline

1988: A border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea occured, resulting in 80,000 deaths and creating ongoing conflict and tension within the regions. Continual violence within border areas still occuring to this day.

1999: *The International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism* set forth a framework of combatting the financing of terrorism through Member States collaboration, and by tracking suspicious financial transactions.

2003: UNSC resolution 1456 on suppressing terrorism outlined the need to combat financial contributions through targeted sanctions, the freezing of accounts, and the active interception of movement between borders.

2006: In response to a global rise in terrorist activity, *The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy* (GCTS) was adopted by consensus in the UN General Assembly and is subject to review every 2 years. The GCTS calls for the strengthening of Member States' national capacities to successfully combat terrorist groups.

2011: Somalia experienced extreme droughts, triggering a famine that claimed the lives of 250,000 people. The drought is ongoing and has ebbed and flowed in terms of severity. This created a rise in the number of displaced persons (IDPs) resulting from terrorist violence (a large number of internationally displaced people are youth under the age of 25).

2014: The Security Council adopted resolution 2178 on "Countering Violent Extremism", which called for the Member States to prevent the movement of terrorists, prosecute cases dealing with forgeries of travel documents, and establish greater international cooperation between national security agencies focusing on transnational terrorism.

2015: During the Geneva Conference, Member States adopted the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. The Plan of Action stated that violent extremism is conducive to terrorist activity, and noted conditions that can lead to radicalization, such as economic marginalization, lack of opportunities and resources for economic development, and political repression.

2017: Kenyan Security Forces terminated the most wanted Al-Shabaab leader in Kenya.

2020: Security Council debate on peace and security in Africa: countering terrorism and extremism in Africa.

Position Paper Policy

Each delegate participating in GMUN is required to submit a position paper. Position papers are formal ways to introduce the chair to your knowledge on the subject, your country's position and relevant history, and the solutions your country would like to pursue. In short, your position paper is a snapshot of what you are bringing to the table in your committee.

Position papers are formal, academic pieces of writing. Please refer to yourself as your country in the third person (ex. Japan believes… or the delegation of Japan strongly encourages...) and avoid all use of personal pronouns.

Position papers must be:

- No longer than one page per topic

- Typed in 12 point Times New Roman font, 1.5 spacing
- Include works cited (not included in the page count)
- The delegate's country, name, and school name across the top in that order

Ex. Delegation: Represented By:

Japan   Jane Doe, Glenlyon Norfolk School

Position papers are generally structured in three paragraphs.

Paragraph 1:

Outline the topic briefly, referring to it in a global sense. What is going on from the perspective of your country, what knowledge does your country have about the topic, and what is your country's position? What are the most important concerns your country has?

Paragraph 2:

Outline the topic in a little more detail. Delve further into your country's position and make sure to include any relevant history they have on the subject. For example, in the UNSC, if your country has provided aid to Yemen recently or condemned the actions of any certain players, that should be discussed.

Paragraph 3:

What solutions does your country propose and how would you like to go about achieving them? Make suggestions towards solving the issue and outline anything you'd like to talk about in the committee, to sum up.

Delegates who do not submit position papers will not be considered for awards.

Discussion Questions:

How can the Security Council leverage its capabilities to meet the demands of local governments to combat terrorism and extremism?

How can the international community adapt to meet new challenges, like youth radicalization, propaganda spreading, and the financing of terrorism?

Does UNSOM need to be strengthened?

What factors can lead to an increase in security within the region?

Would the expansion of operations in the region lead to dislodging terrorists from their strongholds?

How can the Security Council strengthen security cooperation in the region to fight Al-Shabaab?

How can the Security Council prevent the current and potential future rise in terrorist and extremist groups in the Horn of Africa?

What aspects of de-radicalization policies must be improved for greater effectiveness in deterring young people from joining terrorist and extremist organizations?

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