



**Manlius Pebble Hill Model United Nations**  
**Conference October 2018**

Security Council  
Chairs:  
Jacob Roy  
Victor Attah

## *Preface*

Hello delegates and welcome to the Security Council at MPH MUN 2018! Your chairs for this committee will be Jacob Roy and Victor Attah. This committee will be run Harvard style, meaning that pre-written clauses and resolutions are forbidden and will result in disqualification from award consideration. To be eligible for awards, delegates must email their position papers to the committee chairs at [crisismphmun@gmail.com](mailto:crisismphmun@gmail.com) by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, October 19th. Printers will not be available during the conference, so make sure that you print out your position papers and any research materials ahead of time. We're very ecstatic to be chairing this committee and are looking forward to meeting you all at the conference!

Jacob Roy

[jakesterroy@gmail.com](mailto:jakesterroy@gmail.com)

Victor Attah

[victor22junior@gmail.com](mailto:victor22junior@gmail.com)

## ***Introduction to Committee***

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six main organs of the United Nations. The UNSC was established in 1945 under the UN Charter, with the purpose of maintaining international peace and security. The UNSC is the only organ in the United Nations that makes decisions that member states are required to implement, while all other councils provide suggestions. According to the UN, “when a complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council’s first action is usually to recommend that the parties try to reach agreement by peaceful means. When a dispute leads to hostilities, the Council’s primary concern is to bring them to an end as soon as possible.” The Council has the ability to sever diplomatic relations, blockade, impose sanctions, take military action, and much more.

The Security Council is composed of five permanent members: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These five nations hold veto power over the Council, which enables them to prevent the adoption of any “substantive” resolution. However, this veto power does not apply to votes on “procedural” matters, as they are determined by the permanent members themselves. In addition to this, ten non-permanent members are selected for two-year terms by the General Assembly. These nations include: Bolivia, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, and Sweden

## **Territorial Disputes in the East China Sea**

### ***Introduction to the Topic***

The territorial disputes within the East China Sea are often overshadowed by the territorial disputes of the South China Sea; despite its economic, political, and military significance for some of the most influential nations in East Asia. The 81,000 sq. miles of water is located mainly between China and Japan, yet South Korea and Taiwan also have maritime borders with the East China Sea. There are eight disputed islands in the Sea, which reside on top of over 200 million barrels worth of oil. If one nation is able to truly cement their claims over any of these small islands in the region, they'd also cement their right to excavate resources and build military outposts, which in turn would only worsen relations within the region. The nature of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is critical to this specific

territorial dispute because, in order for a nation to receive the ability to extract the natural gas and oil near the islands, they must have legitimate and legal claims over them.

The Sino-Japanese relationship has increasingly deteriorated in recent times, as both nations have sought claim over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, and their intense history has only fueled nationalism and added to the tension between the two economic and political powerhouses of East Asia. China's claims to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are relatively new, yet they must be taken very seriously. Despite Japan's initial claim over the islands in 1895, China claimed ownership of the islands in the 1970s. Yet, now Chinese historians have backed up their claims over the Diaoyu islands to the 1400s, as a map shows the islands being used as a naval port.

This potential conflict is critical, as both nations have continued to flex their military prowess in recent years. Territorial disputes like this, and their potential resolutions, could have lasting impacts on similar problems that may arise in the future. China and Japan have increased their military budgets recently, and Japan has clearly made an effort to possibly change their constitution to allow for a less pacifistic agenda.

### ***History of the Topic***

China believes that their claims on the islands in the East China Sea date all the way back to the 1400s, when the islands were used as a staging point for Chinese fisherman. China also claims that they discovered the islands and named them Diaoyu Dao. The earliest historical evidence of the name Diaoyu Dao is found in the Chinese book *Voyage with a Tail Wind*,

which was published in 1403. Japan, on the other hand, does not recognize China's claims and recognized the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands as Japanese sovereign territory in 1895, after the Sino-Japanese War. The Sino-Japanese War ended with the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, in which China ceded Taiwan, the Pescadores Islands, and other surrounding islands to Japan. The treaty did not mention the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, as they were not discussed during negotiations between the two nations.

Because of this, China believes the Japanese claim is unlawful, although there is much evidence that proves otherwise. Japan was able to claim the islands by exercising its right of "acquisition through occupation," based on the legal principle *terra nullius*. *Terra nullius*, a Latin phrase which loosely translates to "nobody's land," is defined as "a territory which has never been subject to the sovereignty of any state, or over which

any prior sovereign has expressly or implicitly relinquished sovereignty.”

Sovereignty over territory which is considered *terra nullius* can be acquired through occupation. According to Japan, a survey of the islands conducted in the 1800s showed that the islands were uninhabited, therefore they could be considered *terra nullius* and lawfully claimed as territory.

Following their 1895 claim, Japan exercised sovereignty over the lands with little to no contestation from other nations. This lack of contestation changed during World War II (WWII), which lasted from 1939 to 1945. Japan entered World War II and, in 1941, attacked Pearl Harbor in the United States, which resulted in 2,400 deaths. Soon after the attack, the United States officially declared war on Japan. In the same year, China also declared war on Japan and proclaimed that all of their treaties between the two nations, including

the 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki, were abrogated as a consequence of war.

In 1943, China incorporated their territorial demands into the Cairo Declaration, which was written by The Three Great Allies (China, the United States, and the Soviet Union.) The declaration had a goal of procuring “the unconditional surrender of Japan.” The declaration declared that “all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa [Taiwan], and The Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China.” The Cairo Declaration cannot be considered a legal document, as it was not ratified, and neither China, the US, or the Soviet Union had the authorizations to conclude a policy revision of such scope. Two years following the Cairo Declaration, the Potsdam Declaration, which called for the surrender of Japan, was issued by the US, Great Britain, and China. Section 8 of the

declaration stated “the terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we determine.” The Senkaku/Diaoyu islands were not explicitly named in either the Cairo Declaration, nor the Potsdam Declaration. Soon after the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrendered and agreed to the terms of the Potsdam declaration, returning Taiwan and the named islands back to Japan on August 10, 1945.

Following Japan’s surrender, the United States assumed control of Japan and the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. In 1951, Japan, the US, and 46 other nations signed the Multilateral Treaty of Peace With Japan, also known as the Treaty of San Francisco, which officially put an end to WWII. China was among several nations who refused to

sign the treaty. Under Article 2 of the treaty, Japan renounced all of their claims to Korea, Taiwan, and the Pescadores, and, under Article 3, agreed to give the US “the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands, including their territorial waters.” Although the Senkaku islands were not named, there was an understanding between Japan and the US that they would remain under control of the US as part of the Okinawa Prefecture, which contained over 150 islands in the East China Sea. Japan was also granted residual sovereignty, meaning that they would eventually get full control over the Ryukyu islands. Japan and China both agree that the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands were affected by this treaty, but whether or not islands were considered as part of Okinawa under Article 3, or ceded along

with Taiwan under Article 2, remains a large issue in the modern-day dispute.

In 1960, the United States and Japan signed the bilateral Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security in which the two countries agreed that an attack on any of “the territories under the administration of Japan” would result in immediate action by both nations. The treaty still stands today, and the United States claims that the treaty includes the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands and vows to defend them. This treaty is seen as the biggest deterrent to a forceful takeover of the islands.

The dispute over the islands in East China Sea erupted in 1969 after UN-sponsored geological surveys revealed that there were large oil deposits under the islands in the East China Sea. Because of this, the Republic of China (Taiwan), South Korea, and Japan conducted test drilling in the sea. In 1972, the US returned the islands

to Japan after withdrawing from Okinawa under the Okinawa Reversion Treaty. Before the discovery of oil, China took little action to assert its sovereignty over the islands, which was viewed by Japan as China’s acceptance of a Japanese claim. Only in the 1970s did China begin to reassert their claims over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands.

### ***Current Situation***

The situation in the East China Sea is complex, and there has been a recent escalation of military might within the region from both China and Japan. While conversation about China’s role within the South China Sea often dominates, their military exercises in the East China Sea are just as notable. The overall military prowess of China is proving to be something that must not be taken lightly. The People’s Liberation Army has historically relied on outdated and less advanced weaponry,



vehicles, and naval vessels from the Soviet Era, but this is changing rapidly. As China continues to invest billions into developing nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the necessity for a strong airforce and navy continue to grow. Despite the United States spending the most on their military (\$610 billion), China has seen the biggest increase in their military spending. Since 2007, China's military budget has increased by over 120%, or \$175 billion. In 2018, the government announced that their military spending would increase again by 8.1%, which would be the biggest increase in four years. In 2017, China refurbished an aircraft carrier, making it the first in their fleet. The aircraft carrier has already conducted operation in the South China Sea and has also escorted naval vessels in the East China Sea, and the nation has ordered another one to be constructed. Their naval dominance is key to their ability to back their territorial

claims. However, China has also used their Coast Guard to escort fishermen throughout the East China Sea, primarily the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. In August 2017, it was reported that over 200 Chinese vessels entered these waters with supervision from the People's Maritime Militia (China's equivalent to the Coast Guard). These operations are no different than the United States' Freedom of Navigation Operations in the South China Sea which have angered China.

However, the main competitor for China's military supremacy in the region is the United States. Currently, the United States has over 800 foreign military bases, and twelve of those are located near the East China Sea. The United States has continued to support Japan's claims over the islands.

Japan's recent militarization is also very important to understand the tensions in the region. After World War II, Japan was

forced to give up their right to invade any other nation, and their military forces were to be used solely for defense. Japan's military is fairly technologically advanced, as they have received military training and technology from the United States.

Recently, as China and Japan continue to disagree over territory, as well as the ever growing threat of North Korea, nationalism has been on the rise. Japan has seen a rise in support for expanding and increasing the military budget, despite the nation's pacifistic history. But this is still a self defense force which cannot be used aggressively, and has primarily been used for national crises, such as the earthquake in 2011. The Japanese Self Defense Force is currently made up of 225,000 personnel, but the government continues to redefine and reinterpret what self-defense means within its constitution. Article Nine states, "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a

sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes," which is located in the second chapter of the Constitution; it essentially is a promise that Japan renounces their right to go to war as an aggressor.

Despite President Shinzo Abe's attempts to push for a larger military and the revision of the Constitution, Article Nine represents a cherished part of Japan's post-war identity,. Therefore, changing Article Nine within the constitution is unlikely. However, President Abe has laid out a timeframe to possibly change Article Nine by 2020, which could allow for a different interpretation of the article.

These islands are very important to these nations because of the UNCLOS (United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea). In 1994, the UNCLOS established the right of territorial waters. Territorial waters are waters 12 nautical miles from a

given nation's coast. In a nation's territorial waters, the nation is free to have full control over the waters. With this control, a nation can impose laws, exploit resources, and regulate use of the waters. Beyond the territorial water zone is the contiguous zone. In this area, nations can enforce laws, but only under four specific areas. These areas include immigration, taxation, customs, and pollution. After the territorial waters and the contiguous water zones is the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). EEZs extend 200 meters out from the territorial water zone. In the EEZ, nations have exploitation rights over the waters resources. UNCLOS introduced this because of the high increase of disputes and tensions between nations over the resource extraction, and who owned the territory in 1982.

### *Questions to consider*

1. Would the dispute over the islands in the East China Sea be better resolved if one nation exercised control over the territory, or would joint control over the islands be more effective?
2. Since there has been no official ruling regarding the sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, if the islands were to come under attack, would the United States have the right or authority to defend the islands considering that the 1960 Security Treaty between the US and Japan only covers territories under the administration of Japan?
3. What can the United Nations do in this situation in order to facilitate a peaceful multilateral solution to the dispute?

### ***Further Reading***

1. An article which discusses possible short-term and long-term outcomes of the East China Sea dispute  
<https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-east-china-sea-dispute-short-term-victory-and-long-term-loss-for-china/>
2. An article which discusses the importance of the East China Sea conflict in comparison to the South China Sea dispute.  
<https://www.cnbc.com/2017/12/20/east-china-sea-could-be-riskier-than-south-china-sea.html>
3. An article discussing what some key nations in this situation want to get out of the situation.  
<https://thediplomat.com/2014/02/east-china-sea-what-do-china-and-japan-really-want/>

### **The Qatar-Gulf Crisis**

#### ***Introduction to the Topic***

The Qatar-Gulf Crisis is in its essence a large regional Cold War with various countries; it's being played out militarily in the conflict in Yemen and Syria, but the political and economic ramifications that this issue is causing in Qatar is immense. These nations include Saudi Arabia, Iran, Yemen, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and obviously Qatar. Qatar, a country of 4,456 sq miles, complicated alliances, and alignments with extremist groups, is home to over 2.5 million people. It is a small peninsula located on the Persian Gulf with Saudi Arabia as its sole neighbor. The location of Qatar is essential to understanding the situation, as its only neighbor and other nations have attempted to isolate it in every way possible. Despite

its size and location, the nation's role within the regional and international economies is immense and is extremely reliant on their natural resources such as oil and natural gas, which account for 70% of the government's revenue. Qatar is currently the richest nation in the world with a GDP per capita of \$124,927.

The Qatar-Gulf Crisis was triggered on June 5th, 2017, when the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain cut ties with Qatar over their alleged support of terrorism. This conflict is interwoven with other conflicts, including the conflicts in Yemen and Syria, because the same nations are present. The rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia is amplified in the Qatar Crisis because Qatar has realigned itself more closely to Iran recently. There is some consensus that there is a new cold war in the Middle East between the Saudis and the Iranians, and this situation fits this notion.

### *History of the Topic*

Before the discovery of oil reserves, Qatar's main revenue source was from fishing and pearling. After Qatar's oil reserves were first discovered in 1939, oil came to replace fishing and pearling as Qatar's main source of revenue. The revenue from oil funded the development of Qatar as a nation in the 1950s. Qatar then gained independence from Great Britain two decades later, in 1971.

The tensions between Qatar and other gulf nations date back decades. Qatar has a history of border disputes with several nations in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which is a political and economic alliance between Qatar, Kuwait, the UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain. In 1991, the Qatar and Bahrain dispute over islands located in the Persian Gulf, the Hawar Islands and Janan Islands, was taken to the

United Nations International Court of Justice (ICJ). The ICJ ultimately awarded the Hawar Islands to Bahrain and the Janan Islands to Qatar in 2001. Before this verdict, the dispute almost escalated to an armed confrontation, yet that outcome was avoided in 1986 after Saudi intervention.

Saudi-Qatar relations have been particularly tense. After a Saudi was appointed secretary general of the GCC, the Qatari delegation walked out of a session and threatened to boycott all meetings attended by the secretary general. Qatar even considered cancelling its membership in the GCC. In 1995, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al Thani seized power and accelerated Qatar's rise to global power in the 1990s and 2000s. His rise to power was not welcomed by other gulf nations, and, in 1996, Saudi Arabia attempted a counter-coup in order to return power to the former Sheikh. However, the coup failed.

In 1996, Qatar launched Al Jazeera, a state-funded satellite news channel which covered news within the region. Al-Jazeera worried several Arab leaders, since it reported on controversies which previously went uncovered. Al-Jazeera has been accused of being anti-Western, anti-religious, and Islamist. Although it is now banned in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, and Bahrain, the accusations did not stop Al-Jazeera from becoming immensely popular. By 1999, it had twelve international bureaus and over 500 employees. After Al-Jazeera covered domestic affairs within Saudi Arabia in 2002, Saudi Arabia withdrew its ambassador from Doha, the capital of Qatar.

Qatar's support of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) is one of the reasons behind the Qatar-Gulf crisis. The MB was founded in Egypt in 1928, and their ideology focuses on reforming the existing political

systems in the Arab world. The Muslim Brotherhood is considered a terrorist organisation by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Russia, and the UAE. The MB has a violent history, and, in the 1940s, it was even accused of the assassination of Mahmud Fahmi al-Nuqrashi, the Egyptian Prime Minister.

### ***Current Situation***

The Gulf Crisis is apart of the so called “Cold War” in the Middle East as nations are aligning themselves with the two powers: Iran and Saudi Arabia. However, the situation in Qatar is another scenario in which these two powers are indirectly facing off, as Qatar’s economy and politics are shifting dramatically. The interwoven relations between nations within the Gulf and beyond are being tested and challenged. Qatar has faced a lot of backlash from nations in the region. The beginning of this

conflict was on June 5th, as Saudi Arabia removed all of their ambassadors from Qatar, and then the Eastern government of Libya, Yemen, Maldives, Comoros, and Mauritania all followed suit in cutting diplomatic ties with the small Gulf nation. Soon, Jordan, Djibouti, Chad, and Niger also advocated for their disapproval of Qatar’s relations with some terrorist groups. However, the five nations that have completely blocked the small peninsula nation through land, air, and sea blockades are Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates.

When Saudi Arabia and its allies imposed their economic blockade on Qatar, the economic impacts were felt by the entire world. However, Qatar has \$335bn of assets in its sovereign wealth fund. Interestingly enough, Qatar also just built a large sea port directed to improve its maritime trade. They have also strengthened their maritime trade

with nations like Oman, Turkey, China, Iran, India, and Malaysia through direct trading routes. Tourism has consistently accounted for around 4% of Qatar's total GDP, which is why the blockade has hurt the industry. However, the government has attempted to balance this out through a visa-free entry option for citizens of 80 nationalities in hopes of stimulating tourism. Despite this extreme economic and political shift within the region, it is clear that Qatar has been preparing somewhat for this situation. While they have been preparing, Qatar still has many economic and logistical problems. Like many other Gulf nations, Qatar is still reliant on their natural resources like oil, and during this blockade the price of oil also fell. The blockade led to a non-hydrocarbon growth fall to 4.0 percent in 2017 from 5.6 percent the previous year. Foreign financing and resident private sector deposits had fallen by \$40bn, but the Qatar Investment

Authority and the central bank have used cash injections to compensate for the losses. Since 2017, Qatar's stock market has seen a 9.8% drop. From June to August, every flight leaving Qatar had to avoid Saudi Arabia's and Bahrain's airspace, which hurt Qatar Airways, as over 35% of their flights had to be rerouted. Flight patterns have not returned to normal despite Qatar going to the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) to request their approval for alternative flight routes that would involve using Bahrain's airspace.

The Arab Spring is unquestionably essential to understand for this topic, as it proved to be a very telling moment for Middle Eastern countries. The Arab Spring started in 2010 in Tunisia, but the resistance during the Tunisian Revolution soon inspired others in Syria, Libya, and Yemen. All of these nations are still dealing with the repercussions, both politically and



economically, from the revolutions. However, the Arab Spring is important because it dramatically shaped the current relationships within the Gulf Region. The historical rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia can be traced back to the origins of the most prominent religion in their nations, Islam. The divide in Islam between the Sunnis and the Shias continues to influence the way the power houses Saudi Arabia (Sunni majority) and Iran (Shiite majority) interact. Qatar is a Sunni majority nation, yet unlike other Sunni nations such as Oman, Kuwait, and Yemen, they are primarily backed by Iran, rather than Saudi Arabia. During the Arab Spring, nations in the region were pressured to take sides and align themselves with either Saudi Arabia or Iran. In 2014, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain decided to pull out all of their respective diplomats in Qatar. Their primary justification for this political

move was that they (UAE, Egypt, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia) accused Qatar of supplying weapons to the terrorist group ISIS. Saudi Arabia also accused the nation of supplying weapons to the Houthi Rebels in Yemen. The Houthis have been at war with the Yemeni government for over a decade. Initially formed in the 1990s, the group advocated for more representation of their people in the government. Since 2010, the Houthis, which are backed by Saudi Arabia and has allegedly receive military training and weapons from Iran, have been fighting the Yemeni government. The reaction from Qatar was to branch out and deepen their relationships with other nations. They reached out to Iran, Yemen, and Turkey, which has also increased the pre-existing tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran. It should be noted that Qatar has continued to deny these accusations and has claimed that there is no evidence to back

Saudi Arabia's claims. While Qatar is a member of the coalition airstrikes against ISIS and other terror groups, it has also been accused of supporting jihadist groups through funding and military training.

This political tension brings in other nations, including the United States. The United States has been historically supportive of both Qatar and Saudi Arabia, and more recently have worked with them on countering ISIS. However, as the region is becoming ever more divided, the United States has attempted to offer their aid to both Saudi Arabia and Qatar, which has arguably only made the situation worse. The United States signed counter terrorism, information sharing, and aviation pacts in 2017 as well. There are currently 10,000 American soldiers stationed in Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. Turkey has improved their relations with Qatar both economically and militarily. President Erdogan immediately sympathized

with Qatar, and has supported economic aid to the Gulf nation. Turkey has a military base within Qatar, which is seen as a direct threat by Saudi Arabia. Saudi-Turkey relations have been crumbling, as Turkey has worked with Iran and Russia to fight off the Kurds in both Syria and Turkey. Their support for Qatar is also an issue.

Additionally, Qatar has been involved in talks with Russia to purchase S-400 surface to air missiles. They also signed military and technical agreements last year. Russia has advocated for Qatar since the blockade, which has impacted Saudi Russian relations. Saudi Arabia held talks with Russia in 2017 to improve their economic and military partnerships, but proved to be unsuccessful which is attributed to their relations with Qatar.

***Questions to consider***

1. How can these nations continue to combat terrorism effectively while maintaining the current political situation? Is it even possible?
2. What are possible ulterior motives for the Saudis and their allies to pressure Qatar?
3. What role do smaller nations have in cooperating with other powerful nations to defend themselves from other powerful nations?

2. An article that addresses the effects of Qatar-Gulf crisis on tensions within the region

[.https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/06/07/the-persian-gulf-crisis-has-no-winnerhttps://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/06/gulf-states-plans-end-saudi-arabia-qatar-boycotts-except-maybe-iran/?utm\\_term=.1a4cf253a817](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/06/07/the-persian-gulf-crisis-has-no-winnerhttps://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/06/gulf-states-plans-end-saudi-arabia-qatar-boycotts-except-maybe-iran/?utm_term=.1a4cf253a817)

3. An article that discusses potential first-steps to addressing the situation that Gulf states are considering.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/06/gulf-states-plans-end-saudi-arabia-qatar-boycott>

### ***Further Reading***

1. An article that discusses the 13 demands for Qatar that several Arab countries issued after cutting ties with Qatar.  
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/06/arab-states-issue-list-demands-qatar-crisis-170623022133024.html>

## **International Approaches to Counter Terrorism in Northern Mali**

### ***Introduction to the Topic***

Within recent years, the threats posed by terrorist groups in Mali have received more attention among members of the international community. Mali has even earned the title as “the most dangerous country for UN peacekeepers,” and, since 2013, nearly 200 peacekeepers have been killed by these terrorist organisations. Terrorism became more prevalent during the Northern Mali conflict. During the Northern Mali conflict, jihadist organizations and ethnic Tuareg rebels seized control of Northern Mali/Azawad. These rebels were under the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), and were aided by an influx of weapons from Libya, following the Libyan civil war and several international jihadist organisations, such as Al-Qaeda. Since then, Mali has become

known as the hub for violent terrorists and extremists across North Africa. The prevalence of terrorism poses a regional and global threat and has created a humanitarian disaster by displacing 400,000 Mali citizens.

It quickly became evident that Mali’s army was not capable of regaining control of the North, and foreign intervention for counter terrorism was deemed necessary. Several initiatives were launched in order to combat terrorism in Mali. For example, France launched Operation Serval, a military operation with the aim of ousting terrorists from Northern Mali. France’s intervention, which was backed by the UNSC, was the first of many programs launched to counter terrorism. The UN also launched the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), a peacekeeping operation in Mali in 2013, but the peacekeeping mission quickly became deadly and 169 peacekeepers died

over the course of a few years. The UN was extremely underprepared for the threat posed by the terror organizations. The challenges MINUSMA faced had leaders wondering whether or not UN peacekeepers should be deployed for counter-terrorism operations.

### ***History of the Topic***

Mali's history is very similar to many other West African nations in that European imperialism had a direct and lasting impact. In 1898, France successfully invaded modern day Mali. France's imperial reign over the West African nation lasted until 1960. However, France's political and economic influence are still very present within the nation. When Mali initially declared its independence from France, they were apart of the Mali Federation, which was led by socialist Modibo Keita. However, the first real conflict within the

nation came just two years after independence during the First Tuareg War, also known as the First Tuareg Rebellion. It should be noted that the people of Northern Mali are made up of ethnic minorities, which has led to their oppression by the government. The First Tuareg Rebellion was a very small and short conflict, but its impacts on the nation still exist. The Tuareg people have continued to fight for independence throughout the nation's history. The Tuareg peoples (primarily from Northern Mali) are divided by clans, and many clans banded together to fight for their independence and/or representation within the newly formed government. Their numbers were very small, and they primarily resorted to guerrilla warfare.

The Tuareg people were initially nomads in Northern Mali, and there is no real definition of Tuareg peoples therefore many other ethnic minorities have also

identified as Tuareg. The Tuareg people only make up 10% of Mali's population. The Tuareg people are primarily black, and the racial tensions between the predominantly lighter skin North Africans from the Bambarra and Fulani ethnic group have been tense. Since Mali was a very young nation at the time, it relied on neighbors Algeria and Morocco to send arms and soldiers to defeat the rebellion. Ironically, the Tuareg people can also be found in southern Algeria.

In 1968, the nation faced a shift in power as an army lieutenant named Moussa Traore overthrew Modibo Keita's regime. Traore forbade opposition political parties, and made Mali a police state. During his rule, there was a major drought in Mali. Its impact on the economy was staggering, as 60% of the economy was reliant on cotton, rice, and peanuts. The nation received over \$1.35 billion in aid from the international

community, but much of the money disappeared, fortifying the notion that corruption plagued Traore's government.

With the death of Keita in 1977, many attended his funeral and mourned. The death of Keita was very sudden and mysterious. Many opponents of Traoré blamed him for the death of their first leader, and many of his opponents were arrested after the death of Keita. The government is still unstable, and despite some economic progress and recovery, agriculture continues to be Mali's primary export.

In 1990, the Second Tuareg Rebellion started due to the dissatisfaction from the Tuareg people with Traore's regime. The goal of the Northern rebels was to form a Tuareg state. Fighting lasted for five years, and it led to President Alpha Kanore granting the Tuareg region greater autonomy, which eased tensions slightly. Throughout Traore's reign, there were

several government crackdowns, and, by 1991, the corruption, poor economy, drought, and lack of stability all lead to a military coup, which was led by Lieutenant Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré. The Sahel region has been prone to droughts for thousands of years, and it includes much of North Western Africa. In the 1990s however the drought throughout the 1990s caused a famine that killed over 100,000 people and left over 750,000 dependent on food aid. Touré, however, stepped down and allowed for a democratic election, in which Alpha Kanore won a reelection in the first democratic election in the country since 1960. Since then, despite the overall instability within the government, Mali has seen other democratic elections, including the 2002 election of Colonel Touré. However, the divide between Northern Mali and the rest of Mali was still present; in 2006, the government and the Tuareg people

worked out an agreement that gave the Tuareg people more autonomy in the Northern desert of Mali. This was historic, as it's the closest the Tuareg people have come to establishing their own state.

### ***Current Situation***

In 2009, peace between Tuareg rebels and government seemed attainable, as Mali's government had just dismantled several Tuareg military bases and held a peace ceremony in which Tuareg rebels gave up over 700 weapons. Mali also began receiving assistance from Algeria's government in the form of military equipment. Furthering counter-terrorism progress, Mali, Algeria, Mauritania, and Niger created a joint military command. A large number of Tuareg rebels fought in the 2011 Libyan civil war and, after it ended, they returned to Mali. With the return of the rebels, after a few years of relative peace in

Mali, the Tuareg rebellion was reignited. In 2012, the rebels created the MNLA, a fusion between the National Movement of Azawad (NMA) and ATMN. The MNLA had the goal of creating an independent Tuareg state in Northern Mali and ending what they called Mali's "illegal occupation of Azwadian territory."

Soon after the creation of the MNLA, in January of 2012, fighting between rebels and the Malian military began. The MNLA launched attacks on several Northern Mali cities, which led to the government losing ground. In response, Mali's government used military helicopters against civilian targets, an act that was condemned by human rights organizations. Soon after, Mali's president at the time, Amadou Toumani Touré, was ousted in a coup d'etat by soldiers from Mali's military. This resulted in a suspension of the constitution and the coup was quickly

condemned by the African Union, the US, and the UNSC. After the coup, the MNLA continued to gain control of more cities in Northern Mali and, on April 6th 2012, they declared independence; a movement that was not recognized by the international community.

After several months had passed, Mali was still not able to regain control of the north by themselves, and requested foreign intervention. The UNSC approved the development of the creation of an African-Led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) in which neighboring countries contributed military equipment and thousands of troops to Mali to aid them in their counter-terrorism efforts. France sent 2,500 troops to Mali in 2013 and was able to assist the government in regaining control of Gao, Timbuktu, and Kidal. After this, France and AFISMA handed over the task of security in Mali to MINUSMA.



Although the French intervention was praised by many, China, another P5 nation, was worried about a possible abuse of the UN mandate. China's worry is justifiable, as they believe all military intervention should be based on a UN mandate. China supported AFISMA under UNSC resolution 2085, and although France gained the support of several Security Council members before intervening, in China's view, France's mission was different from AFISMA. China believes the motivation behind France's intervention was rooted in national interest and not simply maintaining international peace.

Since its deployment, MINUSMA has deployed 15,000 personnel in Mali. The mission's mandate has been reformed several times to expand its presence in protecting civilians. Currently, peacekeepers are only supposed to use deadly force to protect citizens, or stop threats to peace

processes, and not to pursue the defeat of specific military groups. MINUSMA was criticized by many, who stated that UN peacekeepers are not fit for counter-terrorism operations. In the eyes of some, counter-terrorism operations by peacekeepers may violate UN peacekeepers' impartiality, which is one of the core principles of peacekeepers. Some have called for giving UN peacekeepers a stronger counter-terrorism mandate, although this may affect their ability to operate effectively in different war zones around the world. Altogether, the overall security has improved in some areas in Mali over the last few years, but the situation remains very tense.

### ***Questions to consider***

1. To what role, if any, should United Nations peacekeepers play in aiding counter-terrorism efforts?
2. In which ways can the United Nations aid member states in their counter-terrorism efforts while remaining it's impartiality?
3. What is the right balance for Western nations regarding aiding Mali in counter-terrorism efforts while still respecting their autonomy? Does France in particular have a greater or lesser role than other developed nations?

### ***Further Reading***

1. An article that discusses past counter-terrorism efforts in Mali, some of the underlying causes of the conflict, and provides recommendations going forward

<https://icct.nl/publication/mali-is-it-a-ll-about-terrorism/>

2. An article that delves into the dangers of the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali

<http://www.newsweek.com/mali-un-mission-northern-mali-conflict-aqim-africa-peacekeeping-468907>

3. An article that touches upon the rise of jihadism and terrorism in Northern Mali

<https://ctc.usma.edu/the-local-face-of-jihadism-in-northern-mali/>