



Boston University Academy Model United Nations Conference VI

Saturday, January 27 to Sunday, January 28, 2018

Boston University Academy

Boston, MA



***Special Political and
Decolonization Committee
(SPECPOL)***

Background Guide

Hello Delegates!

My name is Matthew Auguste, and I'm a junior here at Boston University Academy. I will be chairing the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL) and Kasia Perks, a freshman at BU Academy, will be my vice chair. She has been doing Model UN all through middle school and is very excited to co-chair her first conference. I'm really looking forward to BUAMUN 2018, and I hope you are as well. My dual passion for debate and international relations sparked an interest in Model UN several years ago, and I've been involved ever since. It's your job at BUAMUN to figure out how to best use the UN's powers to create viable solutions. Good luck!

Regards,

Matthew Auguste



Topic 1: Managing the looming threat of North Korea

The surrender of Japan at the end of World War II in 1945 resulted in a partition of Korea into two occupation zones. The United States took control of the southern half and the Soviet Union took control of the north. The Americans and the Soviets weren't able to agree on a type of Joint Trusteeship over Korea which led to the establishment of two separate governments. There was the communist Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea which was aligned with the West. Each claimed to be the legitimate government of Korea so Civil war broke out in 1950. The Korean War only resulted in destruction, as neither the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nor the Republic of Korea were successful in gaining control over the entire peninsula. Thus, the peninsula of Korea was divided into two entities, North and South Korea, by the Korean Demilitarized Zone. Now that we have a short history of how the country came about, we must first think about how North Korea became so powerful in such a short period of time.

Joshua Pollack, a senior research associate at the Middlebury institute of International Studies at Monterey, states that being a scientist in North Korea "[is] the most prestigious job in the country right now," he goes on to say that "It used to be that they emphasized the importance of the military in their politics. Now they've begun de-emphasizing that and they've begun to emphasize the role of scientists in society both for advancing their economy and, even more than that, for advancing their nuclear weapons and missile technology". Scientists are honored and celebrated in the North Korean community for their contributions which produces impressive results. There is also evidence to suggest that North Korea has also accelerated its push toward the domestic manufacturing of parts that are required for their missile and nuclear programs.

So far in 2017, North Korea has carried out a dozen successful missile tests¹. Two of those tests were of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) which are capable of reaching the United States. We can't be 100 percent certain that North Korea may be able to deliver a nuclear warhead over San Francisco, or Chicago, or any city on the U.S. East Coast because the technology that at their disposal is not as sophisticated as they make it seem. But it's still worth at least thinking about, we wouldn't want to risk losing American citizens just because we aren't "sure". And in terms of launching a thermonuclear warhead, the accuracy is not as significant because, depending on its size, it can easily cause millions of casualties.

The stronger North Korea becomes, the more the surrounding nations are in danger. The close proximity to the country leaves neighbors as easy targets. Some countries, like Japan and South Korea, are debating whether to start expanding their nuclear arsenal in order to protect themselves from the threat they are facing from the north. North Korea has a conventional army

¹ <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/09/north-korea-tech/538959/>

of around 1.1 million, but its equipment is dated and not in the best condition². North Korea, however, still has artillery lined up along the demilitarised zone, separating it from South Korea, with weapons that are capable of reaching Seoul.

Questions to Consider

- Is it too late to negotiate some sort of peaceful agreement with North Korea?
- How can we reinforce the surrounding nations to properly defend against this threat?
- Would it be reasonable to put this off for now and focus on other issues?

Bloc Positions

EU

The European Union is not as safe from this threat as some may think. North Korea is a danger to the world and the EU should find ways to pacify it.

US

North Korea claims to be primarily aiming its weapons towards the United States which should be reason enough for concern. The US should work on its relations with North Korea to gain a better understanding of the current situation.

Russia/China

Both of these nations are allied with nations that are in close proximity to North Korea and are, therefore, in danger. They should reinforce their allies in an effort to deal with this issue.

Turkey/Saudi Arabia/ Libya/ Morocco/Algeria (Arab League)

The Arab League does not have very strong connections to this issue but North Korea remains a threat to the whole world which includes these countries. The Arab League should help other, more involved countries in order to help the global effort.

Resources

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-21710644>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/07/mapping-the-threat/528729/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_North_Korea

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwbYpdGpx8U>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/28/world/asia/north-korea-nuclear-weapons-japan-south-korea.html>

² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-21710644>

Topic 2: Reinforcing Algeria's Weak Government

On September 25, 1962, Algeria became officially recognized as the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. This follows an eight year war between the National Liberation Front (Front de Libération Nationale: FLN) and France for their Independence. The very next day, Ahmed Ben Bella was named the first official premier. However, his rule, which was often compared to an authoritarian dictatorship, was the initiator to a long fight for power and distrust among the public. In addition, the sudden absence of the French colonists who held most of the skillful jobs left the new nation with a desperate need for educated workers and a great amount of uneducated and homeless citizens. To add to the troubles, Ben Bella declared all the vacated jobs as state owned, spreading further discontent among the general population.

A year later, in September 1963, a new constitution was constructed. It gave the premier additional power as head of state, head of legislature, and chief of the armed forces. Because Ben Bella was in charge of all three branches, there were no checks or balances to ensure he did not misuse his power. He was able to form his own legislature and was the only one in charge of the policies.

Opposed to Ben Bella's increasing authoritarian ruling, the opposition leader, Hosine Ait-Ahmed, quit the National Assembly as a form of protest. He formed the Front of Socialist Forces (Fronte des Forces Socialistes: FFS) and set its goal as the forceful overthrow of Ben Bella's regime. Eventually, fighting broke out between the FFS and Ben Bella's forces. Soon after, Houari Boumediene, the minister of defense, turned against his higher ups after Ben Bella tried to make allies among the regionalist fighters. On June 19, 1965, Boumediene led the assassination of Ben Bella in a military coup d'état, thus ending the regime.

Boumediene immediately dissolved the National Assembly and the 1963 constitution and claimed power for himself. He secured power after surviving a failed military takeover and assassination attempt. Eleven years into his regime, in November 1976, a new constitution was written and he was officially elected with over 95 percent majority. Only two years after that first election, Boumediene died and set off another race for power over Algeria. Within the FLN, two new candidates struggled before a compromise was reached and Colonel Chadli Bendjedid, who had helped Boumediene with the assassination, was put in power. Two years after he was sworn in, he and the new FLN Congress attempted to make the economy more liberal. Yet, the general public was still unhappy with the high unemployment rates. Discontent with the economy and a growing belief that the government was corrupt ignited a movement of Islam throughout Algeria.

The new movement culminated in strikes and riots in 1988 which were met by a government declared state of emergency. The riots of "Black October" were quickly met with stricter measures which in turn received outrage from the citizens and international community.

To respond, Benjedid helped write a new constitution which eliminated the term 'socialist' from the country description and guaranteed freedom of expression and meetings, but also removed all women's rights which had been in the previous constitution. The FLN party was erased from the constitution. The Islamic Salvation Front (Front Islamique du Salut: FIS), founded in February 1989, grew to the same power the FLN had possessed and, in 1991, won total majority of the parliament. Benjedid dissolved the parliament in fear of total FIS takeover, and resigned January 1992.

The five members of the High Council of State succeeded him without a second round of elections. The FIS and FLN demanded a parliament but were instead met with mass arrests. The government now declared another one-year state of emergency and banned the FIS. This triggered a period of civil war, costing over 150,000 lives. Attempts for peace were a failure.

In 1996, a referendum was passed that changed presidential powers and banned not only the FIS, but all Islamic parties in the nations. Elections were held three years later, but one of the candidates, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, withdrew the night before on charges of voter fraud. Yet, he won the election at over 70 percent. He went on to serve his five-year term, to be elected peacefully for a second term after that. Bouteflika's goal was to reintroduce stability and security to a national riddled by civil war. He offered amnesty to the FIS fighters and reformed the educational, judicial, and economical systems through the Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation. Algeria was finally becoming stable. Only a few years later, presidential term limits were abolished, allowing Bouteflika to run for a third term.

However, many of the Islamist militants who refused to take amnesty joined the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat: GSPC). In 2007, the GSPC renamed itself al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghrib (AQIM) to associate themselves with the extremist movement of similar name. They conducted a few suicide bombings throughout the nation before being pushed out into Mali, Mauritania, and Niger by the Algerian government response.

In 2011, riots and protests broke out as a result of the continued unemployment, high food prices, and lack of freedom for many. They were around the same time as other mass protests throughout the Middle East. The Algerian protesters demand Bouteflika to resign, but instead the government lifted the state of emergency that had been in place for nineteen years. Military demonstrations continued, but Bouteflika was still elected for a fourth term.

In 2016, constitutional amendments, which were promised as a response to the 2011 demonstrations, was written in and enacted. These amendments include presidential term limits and a mandatory prime minister of the majority party. Protesters were still unhappy, claiming it

was drafted without opposition or general input. Now, stability is being reconsidered because of public distrust and extremely low voter turnout.

Questions to Consider

- Why is there still public distrust? How could the international community try to restore it?
- How do we raise voter turnout?
- Is the Islamist movement in Algeria connected to the global movement? Should we be concerned?
- Is international intervention the right way to proceed? Should we let them work through the unrest by themselves? Does autonomy matter?
- Will the political tension lead to more war? Is there any way to prevent violence?

Bloc Positions

EU

The European Union has recently formed a partnership with Algeria as long as it follows specific guidelines. These include counter-terrorism efforts, following human rights standards, and fighting against high drug usage rates. They believe that helping Algeria through trade will get the nation on the right track. These nations should focus on communication.

US

The United States in particular has been avoiding all conversation about Algeria. After attempted negotiations to lower terrorism without results, they have eliminated all hopes of partnership and aid. They should try to find a ground where they do not need to get overly involved.

Turkey/Saudi Arabia/ Libya/ Morocco/Algeria (Arab League)

The Arab League has generally friendly relations with Algeria, as it is a member state. However, tensions have been raised between Algeria and the rest of the Arab League due to their stance on Syria. None of them have made efforts to help the struggling government. These countries should think about how to maintain their partnership and peacefully strengthen Algeria.

Argentina/ Venezuela (South America)

The South American countries have not been incredibly involved. Most of them have great foreign relations with Algeria and believe the humanitarian focus is necessary. These nations should find a moderate view and ensure peaceful transfer of power.

Russia/China

Russia and China have not paid much interest to the decline of the Algerian government but still maintain bilateral relations. They should closely examine their own forms of government and formulate a view that includes this unique perspective.

Resources

www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/History/Algeria-history.htm

www.britannica.com/place/Algeria

<http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do?step=0&redirect=true&treatyId=821>

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2017/05/01/algeria-goes-to-the-polls-why-the-united-states-and-europe-have-a-stake-in-its-stability/>

<http://alwaght.com/en/News/111123/Algeria-Wants-Syria-Reinstated-to-Arab-League>

<https://themaghrebtimes.com/02/26/algeria-argentina-relations-very-important-says-malcorra/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algeria%E2%80%93Russia_relations

<http://mediterraneanaffairs.com/algeria-serious-risks-to-the-economic-and-political-stability/>

<https://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21721155-algerians-see-little-reason-vote-coming-general-election-stability-or>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/05/12/algerian-elections-had-low-voter-turnout-heres-why-it-matters/?utm_term=.878e1a57f76a

UN Charter: <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.html>

[Sarah Hough, BUAMUN 2015](#)

