

Dartmouth Model United Nations

Security Council

April 7 – 9, 2017





DARTMOUTH MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

Twelfth Annual Conference • April 7 - 9, 2017

Dartmouth College • Rockefeller Center • Hanover, NH 03755

E-mail: dartmun@dartmouth.edu • DartmouthMUN.com

William Tremml
Secretary-General

January 11, 2017

Emily Choate
Director-General

Dear Delegates:

Bill Kosmidis
Chief of Staff

On behalf of the entire Dartmouth Model United Nations staff, I would like to welcome and thank you for registering for the twelfth annual Dartmouth Model United Nations conference this April 2017. We have been working relentlessly since the end of last year's conference to provide a better and more worthwhile Model U.N. experience for this winter's delegates. We are optimistic about this winter's conference and Dartmouth Model U.N.'s future.

Jessica Campinile
Chargé d'Affaires

DartMUN is a unique conference. We pair world-class delegations and dais staff members in smaller, more-interactive environments to facilitate an enriching experience for delegates of all skill levels. We believe DartMUN's active, small committees ensure delegates feel comfortable immersing themselves in a competitive but supportive environment that encourages trial by error and participation.

Clayton Jacques
*Undersecretary-General of
General Assemblies*

Furthermore, DartMUN's well-trained staff is excited to work with your delegates this winter in committee to equip the next generation of college students with the skills to tackle complex global problems.

Makisa Bronson
*Undersecretary-General of
Special Committees*

Scott Okuno
*Undersecretary-General of
Current Crisis Committees*

With this said, Model United Nations is only meaningful when delegates are thoroughly prepared. To aid in your research preparation, your committee staff has spent hours researching, writing, and editing this Background Guide. The Background Guide serves as an introduction to your respective committee and an overview of the topics that you will be debating over the course of the conference.

Lauren Bishop
*Undersecretary-General of
Historical Crisis Committees*

The Background Guide is intended to be a starting point for your research and is not, in itself, an adequate exposure to the complexities of your committee's topics. To be prepared, each delegate should do further research and focus on processing information through the lens of their respective country or position. If you are having trouble digesting all the information, the Background Guide contains relevant discussion questions that break down the topics. Also, as questions or ideas arise, do not be shy in contacting your committee staff via e-mail. Committee staff are knowledgeable and can help you better understand a particular topic or how your country fits into a larger international debate. More often than not, discussing the problem with another person can open up more paradigms and viewpoints that may guide you throughout the brainstorming process.

Zainab Molani
*Director of
Public Relations*

Michelle Wang
*Director of
Technology*

Eva Wang
*Director of
Finances*

As in years past, all delegates are expected to write a brief position paper before the conference to synthesize all of their preparatory research and analysis. Please see the position paper guidelines on the conference website for specific information about content, format, etc. Committee staff will collect position papers at the beginning of the first committee session on Friday evening, so be sure to bring a hard copy because delegates who do not submit position papers will not be eligible for awards.



Sincerely,

William Tremml
Secretary-General
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January 25, 2017

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Security Council of DARTMUN 2017! As members of this current crisis committee, you will have the opportunity (and duty) to discuss pressing issues within the international community and draft directives and treaties to serve as solutions for whatever roadblocks are thrown at you. This year, your UNSC dais is made up of a Committee Director, an Assistant Director, and a dedicated group of Crisis Staff.

Hello! My name is Alice Bennett, and I'll be your Committee Director for UNSC this year! I am a freshman at Dartmouth, undecided in my major (but hoping for a Theater or Classics minor), and loving it here. I helped found my high school's MUN team two years ago and have been in love with it ever since. Other than MUN, I'm in an a capella group here on campus, and a Shakespeare performance group. I'm so excited to be a part of this committee, and I am ready to guide you on your path to solving these intense issues with your insight and innovation. If you have any questions about research, the topics (, or even just college life) do feel free to reach out!

Hi, my name is Evan Kelmar and I'll be the Assistant Director for the Security Council. I'm also a freshman at Dartmouth. I'm aimed at a Government/Economics major/minor, but I'm currently not certain. I participated in Model UN in high school, and I've chaired a Middle School Model UN conferences before, and I'm excited to facilitate committee at the high school level. I also draw cartoons for Dartmouth's newspaper and sleep/dream about food. If you have any questions about anything related to Model UN or sleeping, feel free to email me. We like people who plan ahead, but come ready to work together and synthesize new solutions with the rest of your committee.

We believe that the issues we've laid out for you are going to challenge you to the utmost of your abilities and bring out the best of your skills in compromising and negotiating. We are expecting lively debate and cohesive directives as you navigate a path for this committee through obstacles and setbacks. Please remember that we as your Dais and staff are dedicated to making this a positive experience for you and if at any point in your research you have questions or need help, we will be there to assist (I promise, we don't bite!)

We are so looking forward to having you here at Dartmouth in April and can't wait to see what you bring to the table in regards to these fascinating current events.

Let's have a great committee!

Alice Bennett, Committee Director, Alice.n.bennett.20@dartmouth.edu

Evan Kelmar, Assistant Director, Evan.J.Kelmar.20@dartmouth.edu



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Committee Background and Mission Statement

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. It was created when the UN was founded and held its first session on January 17th, 1946. The Security Council serves to detect the existence of a threat to the peace or an act of aggression. This is the only council in the UN possessing the power to enact binding resolutions upon member states. Using methods of adjustment and settlement, the Security Council is tasked with resolving pressing world issues peacefully and promptly. As the UN's most powerful body, the Security Council is often tasked with the hardest decisions to make, such as the ones you will be addressing this weekend. Five countries sit as permanent members, along with ten elected "members" that sit two year terms. Since the 90s, UNSC has seen an increase in action and now meets regularly to discuss matters. The most common action for the UNSC to take in most cases is to impose sanctions. Sanctions are put on countries to help manipulate a situation within that country that may be threatening the peace in International politics. Peacekeeping missions are another popular action for the UNSC to take. This involves sending UN peacekeeping soldiers and a UN police force into a conflict zone to keep the violence from escalating or to establish safe-zones. Each of the five permanent seats has the power to veto any resolution, a process that often deters many resolutions from ever being debated by the Security Council. The Security Council has played a role in almost every significant international conflict and will continue to do so.

TOPIC 1: ARCTIC SECURITY

Intro

The Arctic is currently in the midst of a spectacular change. As we have been witnessing in the past few years, the Arctic is shifting from a frozen expanse to an open ocean, leaving lots of potential for countries to access resources beneath the surface

and establish shipping routes over the water. As this happens, nations are beginning to swoop in and try to figure out how to maximize their Arctic exposure and influence. Nations will seek to implement military, economic, and diplomatic means to secure their positions in the new, ice-free arctic.

The concern of the Security Council is to elucidate the current Arctic strategies and capabilities. While exploring the newfound capabilities of this new Arctic, countries should look into the potential for resource gain and how to divide or use it. As much potential for capitalizing on resources as there is, you must also discuss the concerns of the world surrounding the Arctic, such as the lack of maritime infrastructure, the risks associated with operating in the Arctic, and the environmental issues associated with the melting in the first place. Lastly, take heed of the policies of other nations seeking to gain resources or trade routes that may conflict with your own nation's wishes.

History of the Issue

Natural Resources

The Arctic has a very vast amount of potential resources in oil and natural gases. About 13% of the world's untapped oil and 30%¹ of undiscovered natural gas lies just beneath the Arctic surface. For nations near the Arctic, this presents a huge opportunity. For nations that already possess oil and gas sectors, like Canada, Norway, and Russia, this presents an opportunity to expand their reserves. For other close countries like the USA and Denmark, this is a chance to reduce oil dependence on certain countries.

¹ United States of America. United States Geological Survey. Circum-Arctic Resource Appraisal Assessment Team. Circum-Arctic Resource Appraisal: Estimates of Undiscovered Oil and Gas North of the Arctic Circle. 2008. Print.



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Off-shore drilling is a risky and challenging business, made even more challenging by the Arctic specifically as opposed to other oceans. There is a degree of unfamiliarity with Arctic drilling that makes many companies susceptible to mistakes. The US has already approved future plans for offshore drilling, even after mistakes like the Kulluk's oil spill² run by Shell oil. The unpredictable weather, freezing conditions, and ever moving ice caps make the Arctic a dangerous place to drill. Pulling from events like the Exxon Valdez spill³, or Macondo⁴, we can be certain that these spills have disastrous effects on wildlife, water cleanliness, and perhaps our own health.

Shipping

Arctic shipping takes place most often around the northern borders of Canada and Russia. These are referred to as the Northern Sea Routes (NSR) and the Northwest passage (NWP). Another route, known as the Arctic Bridge Route (ABR), stretches from Hudson Bay in Canada to the North Atlantic and the Barents Sea. The fourth route, the Transpolar Sea Routes (TSR) crosses the Arctic, passing through the North Pole. The first three are only passable by commercial vessels on occasion, while the Transpolar Route is only navigable by heavy icebreakers. Shipping along these four routes is incredibly difficult. Many of the casualties associated with transportation through the Arctic are a result of shipping accidents.

² Funk, Mckenzie. "The Wreck of the Kulluk." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 03 Jan. 2015. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

³ "Oil and Chemical Spills/Significant Incidents/Exxon Valdez Oil Spill." *Oil and Chemical Spills/Significant Incidents/Exxon Valdez Oil Spill*. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

⁴ "Oil and Chemical Spills/Significant Incidents/Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill." *Oil and Chemical Spills/Significant Incidents/Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill*. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

⁵ McGwin, Kevin. "Shipping." *The Arctic Journal*. Mediehuset Sermitsiaq A.G., 16 Sept. 2014. Web.

Arctic shipping's future is hard to predict. Global warming and other climate factors are increasing the rate at which Arctic ice is melting, but change may not come at that fast a rate. A study conducted by the U.S. Committee on the Marine Transportation System concluded that ship transits through the American Arctic would only increase by 2-8% by 2025, including an increase in traffic from ships diverting from traditional sea routes⁶. Given that container ships can save as much as 40% of their travel time by using Arctic shipping routes rather than the Panama or Suez canals, shipping companies are likely to continue to consider potential cost savings derived from building an Arctic-capable vessel.

Of course, the inaccessibility of the Arctic is mitigated by the existence of icebreakers. Container ships and cargo vessels can transit the Arctic if escorted by a medium or heavy icebreaker. Currently, Russia dominates this capability, operating the vast majority of the world's icebreakers through its state-owned company Atomflot. "The National Strategy for the Arctic"⁷ makes scant mention of America's current ice-breaking capabilities, and there are currently no plans to build any additional ice-breaking vessels.

Militarization of the Arctic

Militarization in the Arctic has not been an issue since the recent past, with nations finding little value in the icy landscape and choosing instead to leave its navigation to the indigenous peoples inhabiting it. In the past, around WWI, the Arctic

⁶ United States of America. United States Department of Transportation. Committee on the Marine Transportation System. A 10-Year Projection of Maritime Activity in the U.S. Arctic Region. Print.

⁷ The White House. "Arctic Strategy" 10 May 2013. Web. 18 Jan 2017
https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/nat_arctic_strategy.pdf



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became somewhat important for Russia, with aid and weapons being transported to their armies through the northernmost regions of the nation; however, after the Russian Revolution, this access fell back into disuse by the Russian government.

In WWII, the Arctic became of importance once again. Both sides of the war found the possibilities provided by the Arctic to be vital in gaining an edge in the conflict. The Arctic became an opportunity for shipping, resources, and military bases. As the Germans and the Russians went head-to-head, those bases once used during the Russian Revolution became relevant again for sending aid and troops. By the end of the war the Arctic was cemented as a new frontier for military operations.

During the Cold War, military action did not cease in the Arctic, with members of the NATO and Warsaw Pacts still jumping on the tactical possibilities the Arctic held. Nuclear testing became the most intense use of Arctic territory as the arms race continued. Both the US and Russia found the Arctic the perfect space for easily landing their nuclear transporting aircrafts for refueling and eventually testing these weapons in isolated locations. The most well-known nuclear test site in the Arctic is Novaya Zemlya⁸. The USSR used the location as a test site for its nuclear weapons from 1957 to 1991 and conducted as many as 132 tests in the region. The Arctic also became a dumping-ground of sorts for nuclear waste (particularly that of the Soviet's) for the duration of the Cold War. Tens of thousands of containers of nuclear waste and dozens of spent nuclear reactors from Soviet submarines were disposed of in Arctic seas.

⁸ Khalturin, Vitaly I.; Rautian, Tatyana G.; Richards, Paul G.; Leith, William S. (2005). "[A Review of Nuclear Testing by the Soviet Union at Novaya Zemlya, 1955–1990](#)" (PDF). *Science and Global Security*.

The signing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), brought an abrupt stop to the nuclear testing in the Arctic. The passage of the NPT made way for a flood of UN resolutions concerning non-proliferation, including one particularly important General Assembly resolution which specified the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone within a nation's border. As a result, the end of the Cold War left the Arctic region in a sticky situation: nations had created so much military might in the region that actually enacting the international regulations and protocols they had been approving would be more difficult than initially thought. After the end of the Cold War, many of the operations in the Arctic ceased. This does not mean, however, that the hot-bed that is the Arctic is not still coveted by many.

The *Arctic Climate Impact Assessment* estimates that Arctic temperatures have risen almost twice as fast as temperatures in any other region in the world in the last century, resulting in an acceleration of the melting of the polar ice cap⁹. As the ice-cap melts, the pathways for shipping open, and many countries have capitalized on this potential by opening an increasing number of shipping routes through the arctic. Under current international law, all territorial claims to the Arctic region are regulated through the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, or UNCLOS¹⁰. As is the case with all maritime law, the countries bordering the Arctic waters maintain an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) stretching two-hundred nautical miles outward and located adjacent to their respective Arctic coastlines. There are five countries with EEZs in Arctic waters; the United States, Canada, Russia, Norway, and Denmark are all in control of EEZs. The law is far from perfect, however: one of the five nations, the US, remains one of the

⁹ "Welcome to ACIA." *Welcome to ACIA*. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

¹⁰ "UNCLOS and Agreement on Part XI - Preamble and Frame Index." *United Nations*. United Nations, n.d. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.



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seventeen countries around the world that has refused to ratify UNCLOS¹¹. At the same time, other nations who do not have a legal stake in the region are eager to get involved in the Arctic to tap its well-kept and unused 6 resources and to take advantage of the possibility of new shipping lanes.

With a severe lack of UN or other international regulation beyond UNCLOS, many borders in the Arctic remain heavily disputed. The US and Canada have constant issues on the Beaufort Sea, and Denmark maintains issues with Canada in the Lincoln Sea. Norway and Russia, for the same matter, disagree on ownership of the Barents Sea¹². These conflicts pose a threat to international peace and security if not resolved diplomatically, and these issues are only set to become more complex in the coming years. As the melting continues and borders become more skewed, the questions of ownership and what a border entails for exploitation of the Arctic will be incredibly prevalent.

Five nations: Russia, Canada, the US, Denmark, and Norway, have been responsible for recent activity and military buildup in the Arctic. In 2007, a Russian mini-sub placed a small Russian flag at the exact base of the North Pole¹³. In September of 2013, Russia announced that it was investigating the possibility of reopening a large naval base in the Arctic and restarting naval patrols in the region originating from the reopened base. Canada is president of the Arctic Council (perhaps an important Council to be familiar with for this topic.), and upon assuming this role, Canada tends to stake its claim on the Arctic more seriously.

¹¹ Council on Foreign Relations. "Should the United States ratify the UN Law of the Sea?" Council on Foreign Relations. <http://www.cfr.org/treaties-and-agreements/should-united-states-ratify-un-law-sea/p31828> (accessed January 5, 2014).

¹² "Frozen Conflict." *The Economist*. The Economist Newspaper, 20 Dec. 2014. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.=

¹³ Parfitt, Tom. "Russia Plants Flag on North Pole Seabed." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, 02 Aug. 2007. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

Canadian military support indicated in 2012 that Canada might look to establish military bases in the Arctic that could also be used for transportation and economic ventures¹⁴. Norway's military activity in the Arctic has primarily been in response to that of Russia's, in fear that these exercises were meant to threaten the smaller nation. Exercise Cold Response, thought to be one of the largest Arctic military exercises on record, in which Norway and at least fourteen other nations contributed a grand total of over 16,000 troops to various military exercises in the region¹⁵. In 2009, then-president George W. Bush issued a U.S. Presidential National Security Directive that indirectly argued against Canada's claim of sovereignty over a portion of the Beaufort Sea; the Directive (called Directive 66) also called for the Northwest Passage to be regarded as "international water,"¹⁶ Denmark also has a stake of its own, which it made clear when it used the Northwest Passage to move its ship the Nordic Orion through the Arctic. The vessel was the first cargo ship to utilize the Northwest Passage for economic means and as an international shipping route; such a maneuver was clearly intended to leave a Danish mark on the U.S.-sparked debate with Canada over whether the Northwest Passage ought to be legally defined as "international waters."¹⁷ China is among many outsider/non-bordering nations beginning to take interest in the Arctic. The interest of non-bordering nations poses an interesting question

¹⁴ GAC. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

¹⁵ "Exercise Cold Response." *DVIDS*. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

¹⁶ "NSPD-66 on Arctic Region Policy." NSPD-66 on Arctic Region Policy. <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-66.htm> (accessed January 5, 2014).

¹⁷ McGarrity, John, and Henning Golystein. "Northwest Passage crossed by first cargo ship, the Nordic Orion, heralding new era of Arctic commercial activity." National Post News Northwest Passage crossed by first cargo ship the Nordic Orion heralding new era of Arctic commercial activity Comments. <http://news.nationalpost.com/2013/09/27/northwest-passage-crossed-by-first-cargo-ship-the-nordic-orion-heralding-new-era-of-arctic-commercial-activity/> (accessed January 5, 2014).



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about whether or not bordering states have more of a claim to an “unclaimable” area.

Past Solutions

The UN has been relatively quiet on utilization of the Arctic, preferring instead to relegate the issue to regional bodies and other multilateral organizations independent of the UN itself. However, the UN is responsible for the UNCLOS, which remains to this day the only formal international treaty governing the (partial) division of Arctic territory. The treaty has a grand total of 320 articles, which add up to regulate every aspect of marine areas. Most pertinent to the Arctic is Article 234, which specifically addresses the question of how UNCLOS should apply to ice-covered areas. This treaty, now approaching 30 years old, is the only document concerning the border disputes and militarization of the Arctic. Aside from these articles, there has been little discussion over this quickly growing problem. Or rather, the discussion has been less than fruitful. While this has been considered a non-threatening conversation, as the landscape changes there is more and more to gain from utilizing the Arctic’s resources and more to lose if someone gets none of it.

Questions to Consider

1. How should the UNSC work to resolve border disputes within the Arctic, without favoring the West or East?
2. Should nations with no current border proximity or original claim on the Arctic be given access?
3. Should nations be permitted to establish military presence in the Arctic?
4. How should the UN go about building infrastructure if no one owns the Arctic?
5. What would be the contingency plan if a natural disaster regarding oil spills were to occur? Who would be in charge of cleanup?

As a suggestion for further research, delegates are encouraged to look into the UN homepages of their respective nations, and search on reputable sources regarding their nation’s current views and holds on the Arctic. For further assistance regarding research, please feel free to contact us!

TOPIC 2: YEMENI CIVIL WAR

While the civil war in Yemen does not receive the same news coverage that the civil war in Syria has, the situation involves just as many actors, great powers and terrorist organizations. Before going any further, it is important one understands the difference between Shia and Sunni Muslims. While they have many similarities, they differ both in doctrine and theology.¹⁸ The rift between the two religions mainly started with the death of the Prophet Muhammad. The Shia sect believes that there was a successor to Muhammad, Ali ibn Abu Talib, and that all leaders of the faith must be related to him. The Sunnis believed that after Muhammad, who they claim had no nominated successor, any Muslim, who is chosen by the leaders of the Muslim faith, the ummah, can be a leader of the religion.¹⁹ This has led to both sects adopting different scriptures as “sacred,” different leaders as legitimate and different practices as legal. The Shia’s are often known for their more strict interpretation of certain laws, such as self-flagellation, and their emphasis on martyrdom, which stems from the death of Ali’s sons at the hands of a Sunni dynasty, and a Sunni worshiped caliph in 680 and 681 C.E.²⁰ While an overwhelming majority of modern day Muslims are Sunni, close to 90% of the 1.5 billion, this ancient divide between Sunni and Shia leaders has led to

¹⁸ "Sunnis and Shia: Islam's Ancient Schism." *BBC News*. BBC, 04 Jan. 2016. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

¹⁹ "Sunni vs Shia - 15 Differences (with Video)." *Sunni vs Shia*. Diffeen, n.d. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

²⁰ "Sunnis and Shia: Islam's Ancient Schism." *BBC News*. BBC, 04 Jan. 2016. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.



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competition throughout all the middle east, in countries such as Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan and of course, Yemen. The main source of the Yemen conflict arose when in 2015 when the Houthis, a Zaidi Shia-led religious political group overthrew the current legitimate Hadi, Sunni Islam, government. Hadi was the chosen successor of the previous president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, but because of his perceived weakness and failure to deal with many of the country's major problems of instability and food shortages, Houthi forces, that had once merely skirmished with Saleh during his reign, began seizing control of lands in the North of Yemen. Eventually the fighting entered the capital city of Sana'a and put President Hadi under house arrest. However, the President escaped and declared himself the rightful constitutional leader of Yemen. Many military forces loyal to Saleh, (some even accuse Saleh of assisting the Houthi rebellion directly), attempted to take control of the whole country in union with the Houthi rebels. The Houthis, being a Shia based group similar to Iran, has alarmed Saudi Arabia to the threat of potential Iranian influence in its neighboring states. This has lead to Saudi Arabia's military backing of President Hadi in alliance with other gulf states. In turn, Iran and Hezbollah, a Lebanon based militant terrorist group, increased support to the Houthi rebellion. ISIL and Al Qaeda have used the infighting to seize large amounts of land in Yemen, and have begun fighting with each other and others to expand their differing Islamic states. Houthis have taken some strips of Saudi Arabia's territory, but Saudi Arabia has launched a vicious counter-offensive reclaiming much of the lost land. However, Saudi Arabia has still not reclaimed Eastern Yemen.²¹ Recently a UN backed ceasefire deal has failed, so the Security Council will either have to renegotiate the deal and figure out why it failed or discover alternate solutions to end this bloody conflict in Yemen. While a majority of the security council has backed the Hadi government,

²¹ "Yemen Crisis: Who Is Fighting Whom?" *BBC News*. BBC, 14 Oct. 2016. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

save for Russia who supports Iran, both sides have resorted to desperate fighting and strategy, so the lines between good and evil are anything but black and white. If not properly and carefully handled, there could be further destabilization in the entire middle east, heightened tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, as it serves for yet another proxy war, and it would allow for Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups to make significant gains in territory and power. As of now the UN reports that 3.1 million people are internally displaced, and 14 million people are suffering from "food insecurity," which has lead to 370,000 children under the age of 5 at risk of starving to death.²² Also over 60% of all the countries' health facilities are now not functioning, which has lead to a large health crisis throughout the entire country.²³ Various reports claim anywhere from five to twenty thousand civilians have already died, not including all of the soldiers or the hundreds of deaths in Saudi Arabia that were caused by this civil war.

Background:

Initially the Houthi rebel group started off as a purely religious Shiite movement throughout all of Yemen. The form of Shiite, Zaidism, is in fact very moderate, and is the most similar sect of Shiite Islam to the Sunni doctrine. These Zaidis make up about one third of Yemen's population, and are dispersed throughout the middle east. Eventually the Zaidi group split, a Northern based group, lead by Hussein Badreddin al'Houthi, and a more conservative group, al Haq, that wanted to instill their version of Islam throughout all of Yemen. Both were shaped as a pro-Yemen movement as many supporters and political figures denounced

²² "Yemen Crisis: Who Is Fighting Whom?" *BBC News*. BBC, 14 Oct. 2016. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

²³ "Yemen Crisis: Who Is Fighting Whom?" *BBC News*. BBC, 14 Oct. 2016. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.



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Saleh for his being an “American Puppet.” Movements even went as far to say that Saleh let Americans occupy Yemen under the guise of fighting terrorism, when in reality it was to secure Israel's power in the middle east and this Western control of the region.²⁴ For his treasonous words, an arrest warrant was put out on al-Houthi that resulted in his death. This started a protest that has escalated in violence and extremism ever since. The Houthis, as they are now named for their fallen leader, continued to gain power.

Yemen is a country infamous for its immense poverty for a large majority of its peoples. The President Saleh's constant neglect of this economic crisis had epic repercussions in the health sector. Over the course of 14 years, the GDP per capita fell from 707 dollars in 1990 to 380 dollars in 2004.²⁵ This, in combination, with near hyperinflation with stagnant nominal wages, withdrawn government subsidies for food, and higher costs of living drowned government health care workers into poverty. This led to increased corruption among government employees and hospitals, as well as the closure of many health care facilities. With social services down and poverty levels up, at 40% in 2002, Yemeni citizens could no longer afford healthcare at the same time that education and sanitation were in decline.²⁶ As the WHO reported:

“Health facilities are in disrepair, the supply of drugs and equipment is severely limited, and lack of funds for supervision and the carrying out of management functions has led to poor quality of

care, lack of services, and inefficient use of the resources, which are available.”²⁷

The health crisis unsurprisingly led to further civil strife and was a clear example of President Saleh's failure to deal with the economy. This, combined with the inaccurate airstrikes that targeted Al Qaeda, created a lot of unrest and unhappiness to fester in Yemen and eventually translate into the people's support of the Houthi and other opposition groups. In 2004, a full-fledged rebellion began, taking up arms against Al Qaeda, Sunni idealists and the Yemeni government. The next outburst of support, triggered by the Arab spring, happened in 2011. Saleh, initially backed by the U.S., was the target of mass protests throughout all of Yemen. In order to quell the protestors, the United States sent billions of dollars in economic and military aid. Eventually Saleh resigned his post and handed it over to President Hadi, his successor. In the infancy of his presidency, Hadi promised to make Yemen great again, although the economy only seemed to get worse. The Houthi group, in response to the worsening situation continued to gain power and prestige in Yemen and currently sits as one of the most powerful and dominant factions in Yemen.

“While the Houthis are a militant Shia group drawing their inspiration from Iran, it would be simplistic and misleading to characterize them as proxies of Tehran – anymore than the Yemeni Socialist Party are proxies of Moscow or the Soviet Union. Labelling them as a foreign importation of Iranian origin distracts us from the real economic and social grievances, the local Yemeni conditions, that gave rise to a movement like the Houthi. They are a distinct product of Yemeni politics, the desperate economic environment, and the collapse of basic security.” (Rupen Savoulian)

This quote reminds us that while this war has international ties and meaning, we must also

²⁴ Khaljaji, Mehdi. "Yemen's Zaidis: A Window for Iranian Influence." *Yemen's Zaidis: A Window for Iranian Influence - The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*. The Washington Institute, 2 Feb. 2015. Web. 1 Jan. 2017.

²⁵ Health System Profile Yemen, WHO, Regional Health Systems Observatory

²⁶ Health System Profile Yemen, WHO, Regional Health Systems Observatory

²⁷ Health System Profile Yemen, WHO, Regional Health Systems Observatory



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acknowledge on another level this is a humanitarian crisis for all sides in Yemen, created by a lack of basic human needs. The health crisis of 2004 has only worsened now. The third largest city, Taiz, has been under Houthi siege, which has prevented any additional medical or other critical supplies from arriving, leading to many civilian casualties.²⁸ Saudi Arabia has been pressuring NGOs to stop aid in Houthi territory under the claims that the aid volunteers are at risk; this claim is not completely unfounded as in January 2016 a Doctors Without Border hospital was destroyed by an unknown missile leading to the death of four people.²⁹ With the economy still in disrepair and the infrastructure as desolate as ever before, life as a Yemeni civilian is dangerous and unpredictable.

Saudi Arabia is not the only power player picking sides and giving arms. Recently, we have seen a surge of activity in Iran's support of the Houthi rebels. There have been recent seizures by Australian, French, US and other vessels who have uncovered a massive number of Iranian weapons meant for rebels in Yemen; a single shipment just inside a dhow (a smaller fishing boat) can contain as many as 2,000 rifles and other munitions such as grenades or other explosive devices.³⁰ While many intelligence communities refuse to reveal the full extent of Iran's involvement in Yemen, a top Iranian diplomat stated there has been a "sharp surge in Iran's help to the Houthis in Yemen" since May 2016, including weapons, training and money.³¹ Outside of the Houthi fighting force-- which is already funded, trained and supported by Hezbollah and Iran's Al-Quds army-- sits an Iran

²⁸ "Key Facts about the War in Yemen." *News from Al Jazeera*. Al Jazeera, 1 Aug. 2016. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

²⁹ "Key Facts about the War in Yemen." *News from Al Jazeera*. Al Jazeera, 1 Aug. 2016. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

³⁰ Alamuddin, Baria. "Iran in Yemen: See No Evil, Hear No Evil." *Arab News*. Arabnews, 15 Jan. 2017. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

³¹ Alamuddin, Baria. "Iran in Yemen: See No Evil, Hear No Evil." *Arab News*. Arabnews, 15 Jan. 2017. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

recruited army of 8,000-12,000 fighters in Syria whose re-deployment to Yemen has been discussed.³² Iran has taken such a large interest in Yemen not just because it would be yet another state toppled by Iranian interests, but because of its close proximity to Saudi Arabia. Iranian parliament member, Ali Reza Zakani stated that "The Yemeni revolution will not be confined to Yemen alone," of course references the hope that this revolution will spread into Saudi Arabia and cripple the country at its home.³³

Possible Solutions:

Possible solutions to this conflict include:

1. Splitting Yemen, although not ideal, could allow the Sunni government to re-establish in the majority of the country and restore order to the regions that were taken over by terrorist organizations during the instability, while allowing the Shia forces, who have some legitimacy, to rule over the Northern regions.
2. Creating a democratic/parliamentary government that gives both sides a say in Yemen. Both sides claim what they are doing is for the good of Yemen, and while establishing democracies in war torn countries is difficult, there is historical precedent that it is possible to get both sides to come to the table and rule together. The UN could offer large financial packages and other forms of aid as an incentive to cooperate, and at least discuss the issue. If the UN and major powers threaten to withdraw support from Hadi, it will take away his possibility of a military victory, unless he is willing to enter into a new government that includes

³² Alamuddin, Baria. "Iran in Yemen: See No Evil, Hear No Evil." *Arab News*. Arabnews, 15 Jan. 2017. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

³³ Nakhoul, Samia. "Iran Expands Regional 'empire' Ahead of Nuclear Deal." *Reuters*. Thomson Reuters, 23 Mar. 2015. Web. 10 Jan. 2017.



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Houthi forces. Similarly, if the UN and the West and the Gulf States threaten Houthi forces with a new offensive campaign that will destroy the Houthi army unless they agree to participate in the new form of representative government then both sides may come together and form some sort deal.

3. A cease fire that allows both sides to rid both Houthi and Hadi controlled regions of terrorist groups since both sides have publicly denounced Al Qaeda. While this might not permanently solve the issue, it will help mitigate civilian deaths, restore food supplies, help with displacement issues and in many ways restore President Hadi's legitimacy and popularity with the people, which might make Houthi forces lose enough moderate support that they are no longer at all legitimate. This could result in only extremist becoming much weaker, allowing for an easy recapture of Eastern Yemen.
4. A military victory, although an undesirable option, is a route that must be considered as a viable solution. The U.N. could deploy enough troops and military support (even a show of force might be enough) to force Houthi rebels back into the mountains and out of the capital, giving Hadi control back of the country.

4. *How can the security council ensure that this civil war does not spread to surrounding regions?*
5. *Should aid or military force be the primary course of action in this situation? If military, how can we prevent it from escalating?*
6. *How can one ensure that aid is distributed fairly to civilians in both Houthi and Hadi controlled territories? Or should the U.N. distribute it only to those who are known innocent?*

Questions to consider:

1. *Does the security council, or the U.N., have any right to violate the sovereignty of Yemen? Even if innocent civilians are at risk?*
2. *Should the country be split up? Or should the country consolidate power under one government? Even if a large minority of citizens disagree with that government?*
3. *Does the presence of terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIL justify Western involvement outside of the U.N.? Should the U.N. be the only outside power involved in this conflict? (Consider Iran and Saudi Arabia)*