

## Simulation of United Nations Security Council | Containing the Threat of Islamic State

### Security Council | DIRECTIVE

The United Nations Security Council (SC) is the only UN body with the ability to put forth concrete concerted actions concerning a particular global security issue. More information on working methods of SC [SEE HERE](#).

As a delegate to the simulated SC you will discuss actions on *Containing the Threat of Islamic State*. While representing a specific UN Member State, you are asked to adhere to your country's specific policies by familiarizing yourself with its past resolutions, affiliations and geo-politic allies. In other words, become a true Delegate of this country and stay in character throughout the simulation. To provide you with an example: Russia may not be allies with the United States on all issues concerning the Middle East. Therefore, rhetoric, view points and policies will differ significantly. Please [SEE HERE](#) a video of an actual SC session to familiarize with process.

All fifteen (15) Member States of the Security Council\* serve on this UN body to seek solutions to prevent and contain global security threats, in our case the threat of ISIS and the security of the Middle East. With that in mind, the following questions can guide your research as you prepare for the conference.

- Should Russia be a key player in driving out ISIS?
- Must the West organize a ground operation with their own troops to intervene?
- How does Syria and the Assad Regime might respond to this intervention?
- Should Assad be removed to enable peace? If removed, militarily or diplomatically?
- How should Western states respond to growing Islamic threat within their borders?
- Should and how can Iran and Saudi Arabia be key players in stabilizing the region?

\*UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBER STATES: *China, France, Russia, UK, and the US as permanent members with veto power ([what is veto power?](#)) and currently Angola, Egypt, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, Uruguay and Venezuela as rotating members.*

*STUDY GUIDANCE \* STUDY GUIDANCE \* STUDY GUIDANCE*

**History of the Islamic State | AT A GLANCE**

The rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, otherwise known as *ISIS*, in the last few years has made international headlines for their violent and extremist ways in establishing legitimacy in Iraq and Syria as well as worldwide. With their mission of conquering territory to establish a self-proclaimed caliphate (area containing an Islamic steward) ISIS has a rather unique history.<sup>1</sup>

Originally part of al-Qaeda's Iraqi wing, the local leaders became increasingly frustrated with al-Qaeda's handling of the organization, and more specifically with Osama bin Laden's leadership. In simplified terms, jihadists sought to establish an Islamic State as soon as possible despite bin Laden's warning that it would falter.<sup>2</sup>

In more details, the Council on Foreign Relations notes that ISIS found its calling after the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 with its founder, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. As a result of the U.S. coalition against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, today, most of ISIS's leadership consists of former Ba'ath party members (leading party under Hussein in Iraq and loyalists to his regime), who are Shia Muslims and lost their privileges after 2003. With al-Zarqawi targeted passing in 2006, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi increasingly radicalized the organization.

**The Sunni-Shia Divide | A BRIEF BACKGROUND**

The Sunni-Shi'ite divide emerged soon after Prophet Muhammad's death in 632. Not having had a legitimate heir, dispute in the community of Muslims arose over the question of succession. Consequently, two main figures emerged: The Prophet's cousin and son-in-law *Shiat Ali* and Abu Bakr, the Prophet's father-in-law, a Sunni Muslim. According to Time, the birth of Ali's son (Hussein), or Muhammad's grandson, was seen as a rightful opportunity for the Shi'ites to legitimize their religious view soon after the Prophet's death. His assassination and Abu Bakr's consequent naming as first caliph has driven a wedge between the two sects that continue to shape today's relations and events.<sup>3</sup> For more details please click [HERE](#).

**The Iraqi War and its Aftermath in the Region | AT A GLANCE**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cfr.org/iraq/islamic-state/p14811>

<sup>2</sup>

<http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2016/03/07/469462392/osama-bin-laden-warned-of-civil-war-between-jihadi-groups>

<sup>3</sup> <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1924116,00.html>

The invasion of Iraq and removal of Saddam Hussein in 2003 by the U.S. military was believed to be the beginning of the end for instability in the region. Thirteen years later, Iraq and its region is frail, with extremist jihadis controlling parts of the country and threatening the security of its neighbors and the entire region. That group calls itself the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

### **Islamic State today | INVOLVEMENT WITH THE WEST**

Through social media, and the internet as a whole, ISIS has recruited young men and women worldwide to join their organization. By promising high salaries, and a “thrilling” lifestyle, ISIS is then able to use these often European recruits as gateways into the Western world for potential attacks.

Such was the case in November of 2015, when a group of men planned a coordinated attack throughout the city of Paris that resulted in over a hundred lives lost and French security highly criticized. As the manhunt got underway to catch the mastermind(s) behind these attacks, European authorities were realizing the expanse of the ISIS European terrorist network.

Unfortunately, a second ISIS-affiliated attack occurred, but this time in the city of Brussels this past March 2016. According to an Islamic State-affiliated news agency, “Islamic State fighters carried out a series of bombings with explosive belts and devises, targeting an airport and a central metro station in the center of the Belgian capital.”<sup>4</sup>

While ongoing investigations continue, the European continent is undergoing an identity-crisis, if you will. Their goal of open-borders and free-movement is hampered by migrants flocking from war-torn areas, and increasing fears that more terrorists will enter the continent while posing as refugees.

In response, the U.S., France and other countries have stepped up their efforts to thwart ISIS. Just recently, Islamic State’s second in command was killed in a raid carried out by Iraqi, Kurdish, and U.S. forces. Moreover, several other leaders within ISIS have been captured, and land taken from their control. To put it into perspective, “the Pentagon estimates that Islamic State has lost 40 [percent] of territory it controlled at its peak in 2014.”<sup>5</sup>

As a result, Daniel Benjamin – a former State Department counter-terrorism coordinator, states that the Islamic State will increasingly turn towards attacking Europe and the West in order to show strength and confidence to its followers. Therefore, gains made against ISIS in Syria and Iraq will likely, and unfortunately, be met with more attacks in cities like Brussels.<sup>6</sup>

Please review UN Security Council Briefings on Situation in the Middle East pertaining to ISIS

[Briefing \(via video conference, from Geneva\) by Mr Staffan de Mistura, UN Special Envoy for Syria on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.](#)

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/live/brussels-airport-explosions-live-coverage/isis-claims-re/?nytap=true>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/13/world/middleeast/isis-iraq-syria.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/13/world/middleeast/isis-iraq-syria.html?_r=0)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

[Speeches and Statements from Security Council](#)

UN DOCUMENTS FOR SYRIA & IRAQ

<http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/syria/>

<http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/iraq/>

Counter Terrorism: On 9 February, the Council was briefed by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman on UN counter-terrorism efforts against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (S/PV.7618). The briefing was based on a 29 January Secretary-General's report on the threat posed by ISIL to international peace and security and the range of UN efforts in support of member states in countering the threat (S/2016/92).

<http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/terrorism/>