United Nations Security Council

Chairs:
Soleh Anderlini
Kendall Garner

Letter from the Chairs

Honorable delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for MITMUNC 2020! We cannot wait to meet all of you and to see what you will come up with to tackle these challenging issues. We hope to foster an engaging debate and discussion on these two exciting and pertinent topics. Our goal is for you to have an enriching Model UN experience where you can come up with some novel solutions to these pressing issues along the way.

Kendall Garner: I am a junior from Indianapolis, Indiana, majoring in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and minoring in Chinese. I joined Model UN as a delegate freshman year of high school, and have been involved in it ever since then. When I'm not busy being a TA or doing other coursework, I enjoy playing board/table-top games with my friends, watching anime, and discussing random things.

Soleh Anderlini: I'm a freshman hoping to study Biological Engineering here at MIT. I am on from Washington, D.C. and I am also on the varsity sailing team. I high school, my twin sister and I founded our school's Model UN club and participated in 7 conferences over 4 years. When I'm not busy psetting or sailing, I love spending my time practicing my Italian or Farsi and knitting hats.

This guide is meant to introduce you to the topics that we will debate in committee and serve as a springboard for your research. We encourage you to take what you have learned here and expand your research into the topics and your delegation's positions.

If you have any questions about the committee, preparation, or even about life at MIT, feel free to reach out and email us at mitmunc-unsc@mit.edu. We look forward to seeing you at the conference this February!

Sincerely,

Soleh Anderlini and Kendall Garner, UNSC Chairs

Topic 1: Deradicalization and Reintegration of Women and Children from Violent Extremist Groups

Statement and History of the Problem

As the yearly deaths due to terorrism continue to fall, the challenge of dealing with the people formerly associated with extremist groups arises. Terrorism and the growing refugee crisis have recently been major issues on the world stage, but the women and children associated with violent extremist groups often go unnoticed. According to a report published by the UNDP, close to 2,000 women and children associated with ISIS in northern Syria are being held by Kurdish authorities and, in Nigeria, thousands of women and girls, some who joined voluntarily and others who were abducted, are being housed in military camps[1] associated with Boko Haram. Up to 13% of the estimated 41,490 foreigners who joined ISIS were women, and only around 5% of those women have since returned home[2]. Women involved in violent extremist groups are often seen as either coerced victims or active violent perpetrators but their roles are often much more complex, and their paths to reintegration even more so. Returning girls who were sexually abused may face stigma and many may have psychological and health needs. The foreign widows of former Daesh fighters may face the death penalty in Iraq regardless of their personal affiliations with the group. Many orphaned children remain homeless and their status is constantly in flux, and mothers left widowed face the challenge of having to be breadwinners while caring for their children. If coherent policies

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[1] https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/more-1000-children-northeastern-nigeria-abducted-boko-haram-2013
[2] https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/invisible-women.html -- ICAN/UNDP report

with a gender dynamic lens are not created and implemented soon, this issue will simply continue to

worsen[3].

Terminology

Violent Extremism: "A violent type of mobilization that aims to elevate the status of one group,

while excluding or dominating others based on markers, such as gender, religion, culture and

ethnicity. In doing so, violent extremist organizations destroy existing political and cultural

institutions, and replace them with alternative governance structures that work according to

the principles of a totalitarian and intolerant ideology."[4]

Deradicalization: "The action or process of causing a person with extreme views to adopt more

moderate positions on political or social issues." (OED)

Reintegration: "the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable

employment and income… a social and economic process with an open time-frame"[5]

Civil Society Organization: "Non-State, not-for-profit, voluntary entities formed by people in the

social sphere that are separate from the State and the market. CSOs represent a wide range

of interests and ties. They can include community-based organizations as well as

non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In the context of the UN Guiding Principles

Reporting Framework, CSOs do not include business or for-profit associations."[6]

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[3] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/04/world/middleeast/islamic-state-families-syria.html
[4] https://dam.gcsp.ch/files/2y10xuCSaBlvYTDbinjPokvyDO2XLpn5jG4va93JVUzppqj08EDHwnC
[5] https://www.unddr.org/what-is-ddr/introduction_1.aspx
[6] https://www.ungreporting.org/glossary/civil-society-organizations-csos/

Current Situation and Policies

Laws in individual countries pertaining to the reintegration and rehabilitation of women and children associated with violent extremist groups are often lacking or simply non-existent. Programs for women, girls, and boys attempting to rejoin society from involvement in extremist groups are often inconsistent and leave them susceptible to abuse and mistreatment by states and other community actors which can be extremely counterproductive and leave them susceptible to re-radicalization and recruitment. Women and children may become involved with extremist groups for a variety of reasons ranging from coercion to enslavement and kidnapping. Some people also join voluntarily, which must be taken into consideration when evaluating how to address this demographic.

Women and children who return to their countries of origin often face continued stigma and are still considered and treated as terrorists by their countries, even if they have rejected their previous extremist group. In Iraq, for example, even women who were kidnapped or coerced into marrying ISIS members are given swift trials that typically end in a death sentence for supporting the Islamic State[7]. In Syria, victims are effectively imprisoned in camps such as the Roj camp run by Kurdish officials. Local governments receive funding from many governments, including the United States, to house foreign fighters and extremist group members but many of those incarcerated were housewives or were forced to join ISIS and have not been charged with war crimes. These camps also house foreigners from countries ranging from the US to France and Germany. These women and children cannot be tried in Syria and live in a state of limbo because their countries of origin still consider them to be active extremist group members and often refuse their re-entry into the country.

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[7] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/04/world/middleeast/islamic-state-families-syria.html

[8] The UK, for example, has even selectively revoked citizenship but previously repatriated 17 citizens.

The abrupt withdrawal of US troops from Syria left several prisons and detainment camps occupied by Islamic State-affiliated individuals in the hands of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). The SDF itself has admitted that their ability to protect these prisons and camps has already been undermined. There have already been several breakouts, and a recent escape of more than 100 ISIS prisoners during the Turkish incursion into the Kurdish-run area of northern Syria[9]. More than 800 women and children fled a camp for internally displaced people near Ain Issa as the violence between the SDF and Turkish forces increased. The women and children rioted after Turkish shelling hit near the area[10].

Though this is an increasingly crucial topic, very little has been done to address it internationally. Many Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been working locally on these issues for years. CSOs can be incredibly important actors, especially on issues concerning children and gender dynamics. Many governments choose to give aid to CSOs as well as or instead of to local governments due to the specialized nature of their work.[11]

Questions to consider:
Here are some key issues and questions to consider when exploring your country's position and proposing your solutions.

1. How has your country dealt with citizens who joined violent extremist groups?

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[8] https://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Beyond-the-Caliphate-Foreign-Fighters-and-the-Threat-of-Returnees-TSC-Report-October-2017-v3.pdf

[9] https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/10/26/in-syria-the-women-and-children-of-isis-have-been-forgotten/

[10] https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/13/kurds-say-785-isis-affiliates-have-escaped-camp-after-turkish-shelling

[11] See footnote 2

2. Who should be responsible for the women and children formerly associated with extremist groups?

3. How should women and children who were coerced or forced to join extremist groups be treated differently to those who joined and participated voluntarily? Should they be treated differently?

4. What kind of aid should the United Nations (or individual countries) send to the countries housing these women and children? Should aid be sent at all?

5. What kind of international policies should be put in place to deal with this issue? Should there be any international policies or should it be left to individual countries?

6. How can CSOs be utilized in this area? Should they be utilized?

7. What can be done to prevent the continued growth of this issue and the issue of violent extremist groups in general?

Topic 2: Climate Change and International Security

Introduction to the Problem

Since its creation, the goal of the UNSC is the "maintenance of international peace and security," in particular resolving conflicts around the world. This would typically manifest after some clear and present danger, and could involve peacekeeping operations, sanctions, and even referring cases to the International Criminal Court (ICC)[12]. While many of the past cases have involved some form of insecurity—economic, food, safety or otherwise—there is another type of danger which has not been discussed frequently: the impacts of climate change. Although the scope of climate change is a clear and present danger to other parts of the UN, the impact that it has in insecurity around the world is less understood. However, the increased prevalence of extreme weather in the form of flooding or fires is starting to have a noticeable impact, in both stable and unstable regions. From the risks of flooding in the Lake Chad Basin to the fires in the Amazon, Australia, and otherwise, climate-related problems are having a noticeable impact on the economic and social stability of these regions. Ultimately, the question faced by the UNSC is two-fold. Should it consider and debate climate change in regard to international peace and security? If so, how should it best proceed?

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[12]
https://dfat.gov.au/international-relations/international-organisations/un/unsc-2013-2014/Pages/the-role-of-the-united-nations-security-council.aspx

Terminology

Climate change is defined as a group of phenomenon including "increased temperature trends described by global warming...sea level rise; ice mass loss in Greenland, Antarctica, the Arctic and mountain glaciers worldwide; shifts in flower/plant blooming; and extreme weather events" which is often ascribed to the burning of fossil fuels impacting Earth's atmosphere[13]. Since 2005, the land and ocean temperatures have been on average between 0.5 and 1 degree Celsius above the baseline, and the amount of global CO_2 emissions from around 30 billion metric tons in 1997 to over 40 in 2017[14]. In addition to more extreme seasons, climate change has negative impacts on the environment. Higher ocean temperatures are causing significant damage to coral reefs in the form of bleaching, dryer and warmer weather negatively impacts forests' abilities to recover from and resist fires, and the shift in climates have harmed wildlife that depend on relatively stable climates.

Food security is, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), defined as having stable access to safe, healthy, and nutritious food. This term applies both to the individual in their capacity to regularly acquire food, but also to regions for the general population. By contrast, regions with food security can be characterized by chronic lack of stable and/or safe food. While the origins of food insecurity are numerous, some common ones are economic instability, natural disasters and similar crises, and regions with military conflict. Despite efforts by numerous UN bodies under the "Zero Hunger Challenge" and

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[13] https://www.wired.co.uk/article/what-is-climate-change-definition-causes-effects
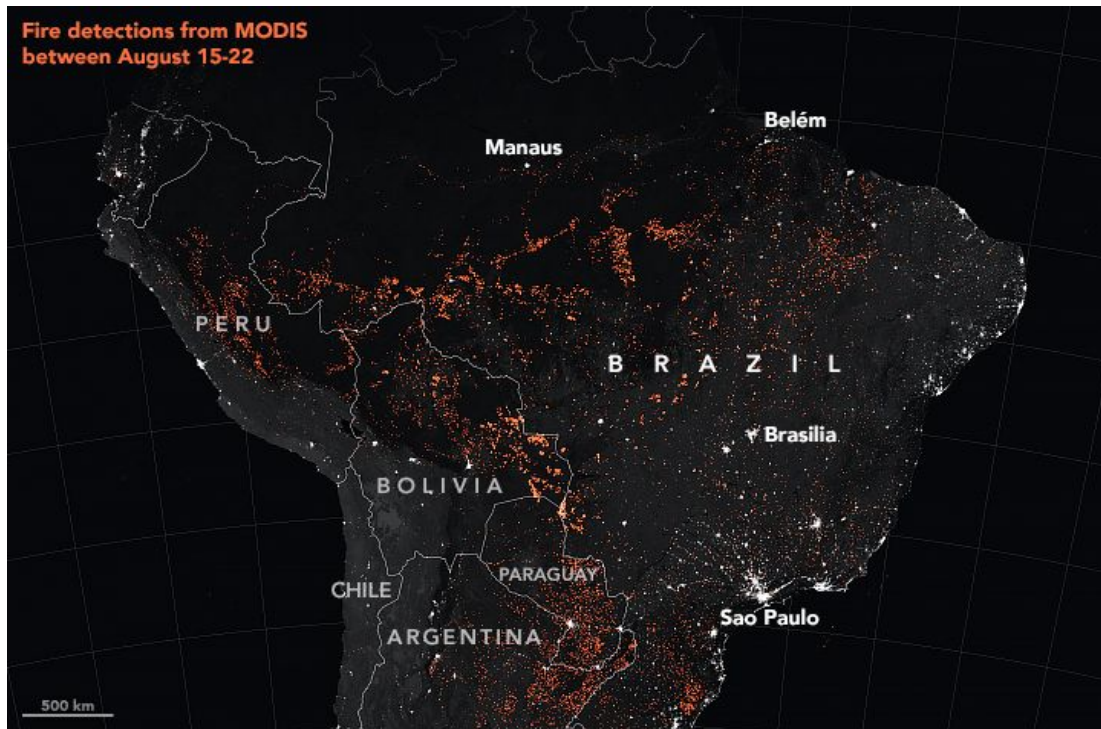[14] https://www.statista.com/topics/1148/global-climate-change/ Annual anomalies and Global CO2 emissions

NGOS, food insecurity remains a prominent issue and can also aid in further destabilizing a region.

The Human Cost of Climate Change

The Amazon rainforest is often described as the "lungs of the planet" as it produces over 20% of the world's oxygen and houses over 10% of its biodiversity[15]. In addition, the trees also assist in trapping carbon dioxide, which helps prevent further degradation of Earth's atmosphere. During the dry season between June and August, the forests are typically hit by numerous fires: some smaller fires naturally occuring due to drier, hotter conditions; and others occuring due to logging or other human interaction. While these fires cause damage to the forests, reduce the amount of available land, release carbon dioxide and can even damage neighboring homes, they are typically contained. However, in 2019, there was an alarming trend of more fires than normal: by late August, the number of fires had already exceeded over 80% of 2018. As a result of the pervasive fires, the Federative Republic of Brazil recognized that it lacked sufficient resources to tackle the problem. For one, the fires extended beyond Brazil's on jurisdiction, and even within Brazil, the scope of the fires was too great to handle.

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[15] https://www.greengeeks.com/blog/2019/08/26/impact-of-the-amazon-rainforest-fires/

Fire detections from MODIS between August 15-22

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In addition to environmental damage, the Amazon fires also have a significant human cost. First, we have displacement. Similar to the current fires in California and the Australian bush fires, the fires pose significant risks for human settlements in that the smoke has severe health implications, and the raging fires risk destroying homes and causing loss of life. Secondly, the Amazon fires have a significant economic cost. In addition to costs by local governments and NGOs, significant international aid has allocated to calm the fires. However, the Amazon also represents a significant economic interest for goods such as rubber, mining, and illegal logging, so the fires pose significant risk for neighboring nations. However, the Amazon fires have also created a crisis in international relations. On the international stage, Brazil was criticized for failing to tackle the Amazon fires, and even in some cases has been accused of at least being

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[16] https://www.matconlist.com/2019/09/amazon-forest-on-fire-2019.html

partly responsible due to deforestation, prompting calls for boycotting the region in trade[17]. This call has extended to the point that some bodies have even requested intervention by the UNSC, namely enforcing sanctions. At the same time, Brazil has called international involvement a possible violation of its own sovereignty over the region, further complicating multilateral attempts at quelling the fires. Ultimately, the Amazon fires represent a significant climate-related crisis that has impacts in multiple facets: human safety and health, economy, and even politics.

While climate-related events have the capacity to become international incidents, they also have the capability to exacerbate already-unstable situations. An example of this is the ongoing crisis in the Lake Chad Basin. Through years of conflict by Boko Haram and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), over 2.3 million people have been displaced, agricultural production has been significantly reduced, and efforts to provide international aid and goods have been hampered. However, severe rainfall and flooding could place up to 400,000 vulnerable people in increasingly dangerous situations[18]. Furthermore, the UNSC in Resolution 2349 notes that climate change-related effects such as "water scarcity, drought, desertification, land degradation, and food insecurity" could further destabilize the region[19].

Past Solutions

As a whole, the UN is rather involved in the climate change debate. Hailed by the UN as the first attempt to bring "all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change," the Paris Agreement establishes and reinforces the global efforts to counter

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[17] https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/amazon-fires-response-jair-bolsonaro-brazil-far-right-united-nations-climate-change-summit-a9115646.html

[18] https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/lake-chad Complex Emergency Fact Sheet

[19] http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2349

climate change[20] and prevent a temperature rise of over 1.5 degrees Celsius. In addition, the UN has held climate change summits, and the United Nations Environment Programme devotes significant effort to the issue. However, the topic of climate change has been rarely discussed within the UNSC itself. The UNSC has involved scientists from the UN World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and welcomed climate activists.[21] Despite this, its actions have been relatively limited: noting the impact climate change can have, in particular on Africa.[22] The reason for this is twofold: for one, the direct link between climate change and international peace and security is not readily available; furthermore, there are concerns that if the UNSC was to consider and debate climate change, then it would be infringing on the responsibilities of UN bodies tasked with social and economic development, such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and environmental protection, such as the UNEP.

As the impacts of climate change become increasingly present and severe, there comes a need for significant action to be taken, lest the changes become irreversible. Despite the efforts by numerous UN bodies, NGOs and governments on tackling climate change, its relationship to international security and stability has been rarely discussed. However, as climate change risks increased droughts, flooding, and other extreme conditions, it risks hampering economic development and food production and increasing conflicts in unstable regions. As a result, the question we are faced with here is, how should the UNSC respond?

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[20] https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/what-is-the-paris-agreement
[21] https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/01/1031322
[22] https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PRST/2018/3

Questions to Consider

When considering your delegation's positions, here are some questions that can help guide you in your research:

1. How does climate change impact regional or international security (if at all)?

2. If climate change poses dangers for regional security, how should the dangers be mitigated and eventually eliminated?

3. How should the UNSC respond to nations or bodies who are indignant to or contribute to climate-related crises?

4. What responsibilities should the UNSC take regarding climate change? Should the UNSC lead, or leave the responsibilities to other agencies? Ultimately, should the UNSC even consider climate change under its jurisdiction?

Additional Sources:

https://www.dw.com/en/the-global-injustice-of-the-climate-crisis-food-insecurity-carbon-emissions-nutrients-a-49966854/a-49966854

https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/UNFF14-BkgdStudy-SDG13-March2019.pdf

https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/climate-change