

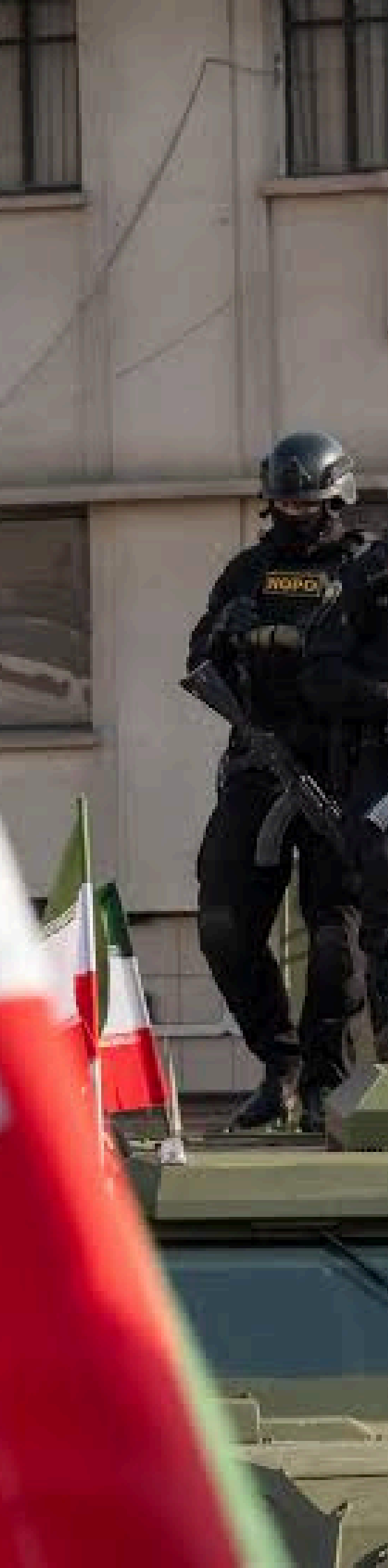


Security Council

Strengthening International Security Amid the Iran-USA Conflict

STUDY GUIDE





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LETTER FROM YOUR CHAIR

Dear delegates,

I'm extremely excited to welcome you to this year's SPMUN security council. I believe it would be appropriate to introduce myself and share some of my experience with Model United Nations. My name is Arturo Pinto, I am in ninth grade. Previous to this, I have participated in 10 MUN's, receiving mentions in about five of them. I started MUN when I was twelve years old, and truly believe participating in conferences has greatly strengthened my public speaking, critical thinking, writing, and general debate skills.

This year's committee topic revolves around promoting international security in response to the conflict between Iran and the USA. This ongoing situation affects people from all over the world, and finding a solution through diplomatic means is no small task. Delegates must defend their assigned countries true positions and promote realistic solutions that are in their designated nations interests.

The topic you will be discussing requires a good general knowledge on current global politics, as well as a deep understanding of middle-eastern relations with the U.S and other western powers. That is why I highly recommend delegates take their time researching thoroughly and are well prepared come the day of the conference.

MUN is an event I cherish greatly, I truly hope you all learn, share, conduct meaningful conversations, but above all grow as people in any of the many ways this event can help you to. Whether that's speaking your mind in daily conversations or learning how to collaborate with others, try to participate in the way that you feel will most help you in your future endeavors.

Best regards, your chair

Arturo Pinto

LETTER FROM YOUR CHAIR

Dear delegates,

It is a pleasure to welcome you all to this year's SPMUN. My name is Santiago Vargas, and I'm currently a 10th-grade student. I am honored to serve as your Chair for the United Nations Security Council. I've participated in three MUN conferences as a delegate in the past, which has allowed me to experience different committees and develop a better understanding of diplomacy, debate, and teamwork.

This year, our committee will focus on strengthening international security amid the Iran-USA conflict, a topic with significant implications for global stability, diplomacy, and the role of the international community. As members of the Security Council, you will have to consider not only the interests of your own countries, but also how your decisions can affect international peace and security.

I encourage you all to research your country's position thoroughly and go beyond the information provided in the background guide. Come prepared to participate, listen to different perspectives, and contribute to meaningful solutions. Do not be afraid to speak, challenge ideas respectfully, or take an active role in debate.

I look forward to seeing the preparation and enthusiasm each of you brings to the committee. I hope this conference is an opportunity to learn, improve your skills, and enjoy the experience of MUN.

Best regards, your chair

Santiago Vargas Gutiérrez

COMMITTEE INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Security Council is one of the six main organs of the UN, and has four purposes as a committee, including: maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, providing a stage for cooperation in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights, and finally to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations. It consists of a total of 15 different nations, with 5 permanent and 10 nonpermanent members, which are voted upon by the United Nations General Assembly.

The first session of the Security Council was held on the 17th of January in the year 1946 at Church House, Westminster, London. Directly after World War II, the League of Nations required an immediate, more powerful successor. To ensure an effective yet measured intervention, the Security Council is the only committee capable of producing legally binding resolutions, economic sanctions and authorization of military interventions.

The five permanent members that compose the security council consist of: China, France, The Russian Federation, The United Kingdom, and The United States. The other nonpermanent members are elected for two year terms. These are currently composed of; Bahrain, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Greece, Latvia, Liberia, Pakistan, Panama and Somalia. Additionally, when the council considers a member nation of the UN is heavily affected by the outcome, they may participate as a non-voting party if they are not already in the security council.

The present topic, strengthening international security amid the Iran-USA conflict, is a global issue that could rearrange multiple aspects of the current world order. The death toll is rising as fast as the political tensions are, creating a dangerous political climate that could escalate the dispute into a global dilemma. Both sides have violated the UN charter, furthering a peaceful resolution to this conflict as a top priority.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

Imagine a waterway so vital that nearly a fifth of the world's oil and natural gas depends on ships passing safely through it every day. That is the Strait of Hormuz, which has become one of the world's most dangerous flashpoints because of the ongoing conflict between the United States and Iran.

The conflict intensified after Israeli and American strikes targeted Iranian nuclear facilities, military leaders, and infrastructure. Iran responded by attacking U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf, laying naval mines, and restricting

commercial shipping through the Strait. Failed ceasefires have allowed the conflict to expand across the region, increasing the risk of further violence.

The crisis presents three major concerns: the possibility of a larger regional or global war, the unresolved status of Iran's nuclear program, and the economic and humanitarian effects of disrupted shipping. The strait's closure has increased energy prices, affected global supply chains, and endangered civilians, sailors, and port workers.

The United Nations Security Council must address this crisis because its main responsibility is maintaining international peace and security. It can pass legally binding resolutions and coordinate international action. The Council must find enforceable solutions to prevent escalation, protect civilians and international shipping, and create a path toward lasting peace.





KEY TERMS

Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC): An elite branch of Iran's armed forces with major economic and political influence, separate from the regular military.

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA): The 2015 nuclear deal that limited Iran's nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief.

Uranium enrichment: The process of concentrating uranium for use in nuclear energy or, at higher levels, nuclear weapons.

Strait of Hormuz: A narrow waterway between Iran and Oman through which much of the world's oil and gas is shipped.

Naval blockade: The use of a navy to block ships from entering or leaving certain ports or waters.

Ballistic missile: A rocket-propelled weapon that falls toward its target under gravity after launch.

Sea mine: An underwater explosive that detonates when a ship passes nearby.

De-escalation: Steps taken to reduce a conflict's intensity and lower the risk of further violence.

Bunker-buster bomb: A bomb designed to penetrate deep underground or reinforced structures before detonating.



KEY TERMS

Ceasefire: An agreement between opposing sides to stop fighting, temporarily or permanently.

Sanctions: Economic or political penalties used to pressure a country to change its behavior.

Proxy group: An armed group backed by a foreign government but not formally part of its military.

Axis of Resistance: An informal alliance of Iran and allied armed groups, including Hezbollah and militias in Iraq and Yemen.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): A formal agreement between parties, often a step toward a binding treaty.

Article 51 of the UN Charter: The UN Charter provision recognizing a country's right to self-defense against armed attack.

Chokepoint: A narrow passage, such as a strait, whose control gives major strategic or economic leverage.

Non-proliferation: Efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons.

Belligerent: A country or group actively engaged in a war or armed conflict.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The roots of the U.S.-Iran conflict go back to 1979, when the Iranian Revolution overthrew the U.S.-backed Shah and established the Islamic Republic. Later that year, Iranian students took over the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and held American diplomats hostage for 444 days. This ended diplomatic relations and created decades of distrust. Iran has since opposed U.S. military presence and its alliance with Israel, while the U.S. has viewed Iran as a destabilizing force in the Middle East.

During the 2000s and 2010s, Iran's nuclear program became the main source of tension. In 2015, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief. However, the U.S. withdrew from the agreement in 2018 and restored sanctions. Iran responded by increasing uranium enrichment, while other incidents, including the 2020 U.S. killing of Iranian commander Qasem Soleimani, further increased tensions.

The conflict became much more serious in June 2025, when Israel attacked Iranian nuclear and military sites. Iran retaliated, and the U.S. later joined Israel by striking Iran's main nuclear facilities. A ceasefire ended the twelve-day war, but tensions continued. On February 28, 2026, the U.S. and Israel



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

launched another major offensive, killing Iran's Supreme Leader and other senior officials. Iran responded with attacks against Israel, U.S. forces, and Gulf states.

Iran then restricted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, while the U.S. imposed a naval blockade on Iranian ports. Although ceasefires and the Islamabad Memorandum attempted to restore peace, the ceasefire collapsed by July 2026 after attacks on commercial shipping resumed.

The countries most affected are Iran, Israel, the United States, and Gulf states such as Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. The conflict continues because of decades of hostility, Iran's nuclear program, Israeli-Iranian rivalry, U.S. involvement in the region, and disputes over regional security and the Strait of Hormuz.



CURRENT SITUATION

As of September 2026, the conflict between the United States and Iran remains active and unresolved. Although large-scale strikes have become less frequent since the summer, tensions remain high, especially around the strait. The conflict has also affected other regional crises, including renewed fighting between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon, the civil war in Yemen, and instability around the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab Strait.

The Strait of Hormuz is at the center of the crisis because it previously carried about 25% of the world's seaborne oil trade and 20% of liquefied natural gas exports. Since Iran began attacking and mining the waterway, dozens of commercial vessels have been affected, causing at least 20 deaths among seafarers, injuries, and major disruptions to global trade and energy supplies. The U.S. Navy has begun escorting commercial ships through the Strait while maintaining a blockade intended to restrict Iranian access to its ports.

Diplomatic efforts are continuing, but no lasting agreement has been reached. In August 2026, Iran and Oman proposed a temporary shipping corridor through Iranian and Omani waters and a plan to clear mines from the Strait. Gulf countries continued discussing the proposal in September, but implementation depends on resolving the U.S. blockade and other disagreements. A commercial vessel was also recently struck by an unidentified projectile, showing that the waterway remains dangerous.

The U.S. has increased economic sanctions against Iran and threatened further penalties against countries buying Iranian oil. China, one of Iran's largest oil customers, has rejected these sanctions, creating

CURRENT SITUATION

additional tension between major global powers. Iran continues to resist U.S. demands despite increasing economic pressure.

Within the United Nations, the Security Council has struggled to take stronger action because Russia and China disagree with other members about how the conflict should be handled. The UN has condemned attacks on Gulf states and discussed the safety of commercial shipping, while mediators from Pakistan and Qatar continue looking for ways to restart U.S.-Iran negotiations.

The main challenges are securing the Strait of Hormuz, protecting civilians and international shipping, preventing further military escalation, addressing Iran's nuclear program, and dealing with the wider effects in Lebanon and Yemen. As of mid-September, no date has been set for renewed formal peace talks, leaving the region in a fragile and uncertain situation.

SOLUTIONS

The international community has previously attempted to reduce tensions between Iran and the United States primarily through diplomacy. The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) demonstrated that negotiations could temporarily limit Iran's nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief. However, the US withdrawal from the agreement in 2018 and the deterioration of relations showed the difficulty of maintaining agreements without strong guarantees that both sides will follow them.

In the current conflict, diplomatic efforts have again been attempted. Oman has acted as a mediator between Iran and the United States, while Pakistan has also played an important role in facilitating negotiations. In June 2026, Iran and the US reached an interim memorandum intended to halt hostilities, reopen the Strait of Hormuz, provide some sanctions relief, and create a 60-day period for negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. However, the agreement came under pressure after both sides accused each other of violations, and fighting subsequently resumed.

The conflict also involves issues beyond military, particularly Iran's nuclear program, sanctions, and the blockade on the Strait of Hormuz. A broader agreement could therefore address these issues simultaneously: Iran could receive phased sanctions relief in exchange for verifiable nuclear restrictions, while all parties could commit to maintaining freedom of navigation through the Strait. This approach would build on the areas already identified during the June negotiations rather than attempting to solve each issue separately.

The committee's focus during the resolution stages could include creating conditions for a long-term political settlement rather than simply another temporary pause in fighting. Possible measures include stronger UN monitoring, guarantees for the implementation of an agreement,

SOLUTIONS

protection of civilian infrastructure, and diplomatic consequences for violations. The objective should be to reduce the possibility of renewed escalation while giving both Iran and the United States incentives to remain at the negotiating table. The specific mechanisms and conditions of such an agreement should remain open for delegates to develop according to their countries' interests and positions.

BLOC POSITIONS

United States:

The US believes Iran represents a major threat due to their alleged nuclear program, ballistic missile capabilities and their blocking of the Strait of Hormuz; they are currently enforcing both economic as well as military pressure. Their current priorities in regards to the conflict are preventing Iran from launching nuclear weapons, maintaining freedom of shipments through the Strait of Hormuz, preventing Iran from rebuilding militarily, and forcing an agreement on Washington's terms.

Iran:

Iran argues the US attacked their sovereignty first, and that their acts are therefore justified. They demand sanctions relief and maintain the Strait of Hormuz closed in retaliation to the US's economic blockade. Iran claims to hold the right to peaceful nuclear development, and asks for the removal of foreign military forces from the region, stating they act in self-defense and in protection of their independence.

Russia:

Russia opposes unilateral sanctions and wishes to limit the U.S.'s influence in the Middle East. They stand as Iran's closest P5 ally, repeatedly positioning themselves against western pressure. Russia supports Iran's rights to peaceful nuclear development and calls for negotiations between Iran and USA without preconditions imposed through force. They also claim to support the protection of international shipping and civilians, as long as said measures do not become justifications for further military action.

China:

China acts as the largest swing state in this conflict. They maintain that Iran has a right to sovereignty, however they also condemn the

BLOC POSITIONS

closing of trade routes, attacks against civilian populations and gulf states, and wish for both states to enter negotiations in regards to Iran's nuclear program. China calls for immediate de-escalation, protection of freedom of navigation, and a diplomatic framework that addresses nuclear proliferation on both Iran's and the rest of the world's concerns on nuclear rights proliferation.

United Kingdom:

The United Kingdom considers Iran's nuclear activities, missile capabilities, and regional attacks are serious threats to international stability. They support diplomatic negotiations but urge Iran to comply with international nuclear obligations. They support proportionate sanctions and seek a resolution that pressures Iran to act according to international conventions.

Israel:

Israel considers Iran's nuclear program to be an immediate threat to Israeli and regional security. Israel maintains Iran must not be permitted to acquire a nuclear weapon or rebuild capabilities that could threaten neighboring states. Israel supports international action to prevent nuclear advancement and protect from Iranian attacks.

Saudi Arabia:

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia considers the protection of Gulf states and regional stability to be the immediate priorities of the Security Council. They support international efforts to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons and to restrain attacks by Iranian-backed groups. Saudi Arabia supports a diplomatic settlement that guarantees Gulf security, respects national sovereignty, and restores freedom of navigation.

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION PAPER MUST ANSWER

A resolution paper must answer key questions that address the main challenges of the topic and explore how they can be effectively resolved. These questions should help delegates identify the most important obstacles, consider different perspectives, and develop realistic and practical solutions. In the case of the Iran–US conflict, delegates should focus on questions involving diplomacy, military escalation, nuclear concerns, sanctions, regional security, and the protection of civilians.

1. How can the UN establish and maintain a lasting ceasefire between Iran and the United States?
2. What mechanisms could be used to verify that both sides are complying with a ceasefire or future agreement?
3. How can the international community prevent disagreements over Iran's nuclear program from leading to further military escalation?
4. What role should neutral or regional countries play in mediating negotiations between Iran and the United States?
5. How can sanctions be addressed while still encouraging Iran to comply with international agreements?
6. How can the Security Council ensure freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz while respecting Iran's sovereignty?
7. What measures can protect civilians and critical infrastructure from the consequences of continued military confrontation?
8. How can the international community respond if either side violates a negotiated agreement without immediately escalating the conflict further?
9. How can the Security Council overcome disagreements between its permanent members that may prevent decisive action?
10. What long-term guarantees could make both Iran and the United States more willing to remain committed to a diplomatic agreement?

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