



The Arab League: Joint Defense Council

Note from the In-Room Director

Dear Delegates,

I would like to first welcome you all to &MUN XII and Williamsburg, VA! My name is Julia Masterman, and I will be your in-room Director for the *Arab League: Joint Defense Council* committee. I am currently a senior here at William & Mary, and I am originally from Annandale, Virginia. I am double majoring in Government and Global Studies with a concentration in Middle Eastern Studies.

My Model UN career has been long and fruitful, beginning in 7th grade. I continued with Model UN throughout middle and high school, and have been grateful to have many wonderful opportunities to engage with MUN throughout my college career. I began my collegiate MUN career as the Charge D’Affaires for WMHSMUN (our high school conference) my freshman year, and I have since directed committees at all three of our conferences throughout my four years of college, which include WMIDMUN, WMHSMUN, and of course, &MUN. These experiences have led me to serve as the Head Delegate for W&M’s travel team for the past two years, so I have likely seen a lot of you around the circuit (I’m a GA enjoyer myself and have dabbled in UNSC). My involvement with Model UN throughout much of my life has helped to make me more confident, articulate, and globally-minded, and I hope that this weekend is able to meaningfully expand your understanding of debate and negotiation.

Outside of Model UN, I have also enjoyed my time at W&M through being involved with a variety of extracurricular organizations. I work for the TRIP research lab at the Global Research Institute, host a radio show with WCWM (tune into 90.9 WCWM while in town!), and work to prevent sexual violence on campus with the Someone You Know organization. Beyond all this, I spend my time watching *Glee* (justice for Rachel Berry), listening to music (my current favorites are Elliott Smith, Phoebe Bridgers, and Alex G), and trying out different coffee shops. I look forward to getting to know you all as well throughout conference weekend! This committee combines my two majors and thus my two passions, and I am so excited and honored that I will be spending my final &MUN with you all in such an important committee.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me via email with any questions that you may have prior to our first committee session. Best of luck in your preparation, and I cannot wait to see you all here in Williamsburg.

Best,

Julia Masterman (she/her)
jdmasterman@wm.edu



Note from the Crisis Director

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to &MUN XII and to the *Arab League: Joint Defense Council*. I am Laila Hall and it is my pleasure to be your Crisis Director for this committee. I am a freshman from Arlington, VA intending to major in History. In addition to this conference, I am also an active member of William & Mary's International Relations Club as a member of the Service Board and as Charge d'Affaires for our high school conference. Outside of MUN, I also participate in colorguard and Drum Corps International (DCI). In my free time, I love to read, take walks around Colonial Williamsburg, and am slowly making my way through Doctor Who.

The Arab League presents a unique opportunity to debate and propose solutions within the context of a localized regional body. The Middle East is a region steeped in rich cultural and intellectual heritage, and I hope this committee devises clever solutions to address the Gulf War. Additionally, as a hybrid committee, we hope to combine elements of GA and crisis style MUN to present a unique challenge for delegates this spring. Furthermore, it should go without saying that despite ongoing tensions between Israel and Palestine, it is not the duty of this committee to debate this topic. I expect you all to approach this committee respectfully and graciously.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. I cannot wait to welcome you all to William & Mary's beautiful campus this spring!

Sincerely,

Laila Hall (she/her)

lehall@wm.edu



Background

Committee Structure

The Arab League: Joint Defense Council will be taking the form of a traditional UNSC-style committee at &MUN this year. This means that our committee will be a hybrid between crisis and general assembly structure. For the first half of the conference, we will be operating as a crisis committee, including both backroom crisis notes and in-room directive cycles. We will also be allowing for joint personal directives during this portion of the committee. Following the conclusion of the crisis portion, the committee will work together to establish a topic for the GA portion based on where the crisis discussions and updates lead to. The committee will vote on a topic and then will write standard GA-style resolutions to address the selected topic.

While this committee follows the procedural structure of a UNSC committee, no member states will be granted veto power. This means that all directive votes will be determined by a standard simple majority and all resolution votes will be determined by a standard $\frac{2}{3}$ majority. During the first committee session, the procedure will be discussed in more detail. Delegates are welcome to reach out with logistical questions beforehand to the email provided in the director letter.

Committee Expectations

Delegates will be expected to engage in this committee as if the year is 1990, starting two months before the invasion of Kuwait. This means that resolutions and debate can only include information that would have been true at this point in time. Delegates may use the actual events that occurred after 1990 during the Gulf War to inform their research and ideas, but in committee sessions, delegates will simulate the Arab League summit as if these events have not yet occurred.

As always, delegates are required to debate in accordance with the values of &MUN and more largely the International Relations Club at William & Mary, both of which encourage diplomacy, thoughtful exploration of topics, and cultural sensitivity. In collaborating, creating innovative solutions, and fostering a safe and productive environment, delegates must lead with awareness of the sensitivity of the topics being discussed. Delegates are expected to appreciate and respect the cultures and religions of the region at large throughout every aspect of the committee. In particular, we ask that delegates do not bring in discussions of current events in Israel and Palestine into committee. While this topic is globally significant and pertinent to the Arab League Joint Defense Council, out of respect for the ongoing nature of this conflict and the potential personal experiences of delegates at &MUN, we ask that delegates focus their awareness and dedication to understanding these current events outside of our committee meetings.

If any delegates are ever uncertain about whether a certain topic or idea is appropriate for debate, they are encouraged to ask the chair and err on the side of caution, both before and throughout the conference.

Arab League: Joint Defense Council

The Arab League was formed in 1945 by Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen as a product of the growing sentiments of pan-Arabism, also known as Arab nationalism. Pan-Arabism was an ideology established in Syria and largely popularized in Egypt rooted in the desire to create a unified Arab nation, calling back to times before colonialism and the establishment of arbitrary borders. Many Arab people equated the success of the Islamic Golden Age with this unity, identifying more significantly with the Arab identity than the specific nation in which they reside. Thus, the Arab League and later the Joint Defense Council were created as byproducts of growing opposition to colonial intervention in the Middle East and the popular idea of bringing together the Arab world into a united front politically, culturally, and ideologically.

Upon foundation, the Arab League specifically sought to mediate disputes affecting member states and to coordinate social, economic, political, and cultural programs. In April of 1950, the League's purview was expanded via the Treaty of Joint Defence and Economic Co-operation of the League of Arab States to incorporate joint military and economic initiatives into the political, social, and cultural work of the Arab League. Evoking a similar sentiment to the foundational document for NATO, the treaty writes that "The Contracting States consider any [act of] armed aggression made against any one or more of them or their armed forces, to be directed against them all". Thus, it was affirmed that the Arab League's Joint Defense Council would exist to provide a unified security front through the Arab world.

The Joint Defense Council does not meet regularly, but rather meets on an ad hoc basis when security threats arise. The Arab League itself meets routinely, but there have been 12 emergency meetings called by the Arab League regarding security threats. Prior to this committee, however, there have only been six emergency summits, and now it is convening to discuss rising tensions regarding control over oil, Iraq's increasing regional domination, and general disagreements throughout the region.

Topic: The Gulf War

A Snapshot of the Arab World

The post-colonial Middle East continued to experience major political and intellectual change. The ideology of Pan-Arabism is on the decline after the breakup of the United Arab Republic and the Six-Day War. Proxy conflicts such as the Lebanese Civil War challenge religious ideology and reflect the harsh realities of the Arab Cold War. Additionally, Saudi Arabia has begun to push a Pan-Islamist agenda to combat Soviet influence in the Arab region. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 saw the beginnings of the Islamic Republic of Iran, leading to massive international sanctions. In the Persian Gulf, the Ba'ath party comes to power in Syria and Iraq, reflecting a more nationalistic attitude.

Saddam Hussein's Iraq

Saddam Hussein rose to prominence as a member of the Ba'ath party in the late 1950s and through the 1960s. After the Ba'athist coup of 1968, Hussein would become an integral leader in Iraq, as he consolidated power and nationalized Iraq's oil industry. During this time he also shifted the goals of the Ba'ath party. Originally rooted in Pan-Arabism, the Ba'ath party would grow more nationalistic under Saddam Hussein's influence as he introduced widespread prejudice against the Kurds and Shi'a Muslims. Hussein then became the President of Iraq in 1979. As president, Hussein sought to become the dominant power in the Arab world, undermining Egypt and looking to take control of the Persian Gulf. Additionally, Hussein was politically savvy, establishing a cult of personality and secret police.

However, Saddam Hussein's early presidency would be marked by the Iran-Iraq War. Beginning in late 1980, Iraqi forces invaded Iran's western border, seizing oil fields and the city of Khorramshahr but failing to secure the necessary oil-refining plants. After this early offensive, a prolonged period of attrition and a stalemate began in the area. In early 1982, Iranian forces mobilized and recaptured Khorramshahr, pushing the Iraqi forces out of their newly captured land. Sensing inevitable failure, Hussein began to push for peace with Iran. However, Iran remained wary of Iraq, as Iran's majority Shi'a population remained a threat to Iraqi Ba'athist ideology, and invaded Iraq's Al-Baṣrah province. Both nations utilized air and missile weaponry to attack civilian centers, military posts, and important oil facilities. The war heavily affected oil exports in both Iran and Iraq, as oil tankers in the Persian Gulf were destroyed in the 'Tanker War,' heavily reducing oil production and drawing international attention. Iraqi forces received support from numerous international powers including the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia, and the United States, which bolstered Iraq's military forces and weaponry.

In 1987, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) unanimously passed Resolution 598, demanding a ceasefire, to which Iraq immediately accepted. Iran would later accept the resolution in 1988, after Iran Air Flight 655 was shot down by American forces, killing 290 Iranians. The end result of the war was *status-quo antebellum* at the cost of mass casualties including 50,000-100,000 Kurds in the Iraqi Al-Anfāl genocide. In the aftermath of the Iran-

Iraq War, Saddam Hussein's Iraq would face massive foreign debt, an estimated \$37 million USD. Of this, Iraq owed a considerable amount to Kuwait, their rich but militarily weak neighbor to the southeast.

U.S. Interventionism in the Middle East

The greatest external threat to Iraq in the buildup to the Gulf War is the United States. Since the Second World War and particularly after the start of the Cold War, the U.S. has had a keen interest in Middle Eastern affairs. The primary objectives of American policy in the region have focused on maintaining the free flow of oil from the Persian Gulf and undermining the influence of the Soviet Union. However, in their efforts to achieve these goals, the U.S. has often been accused of promoting democracy over their promises of stability.

The United States' modus operandi in the Middle East has always been the promise of financial or military aid. Famously, in the 1978 Camp David Accords, the U.S. rewarded Egypt's signage towards peace with a substantial long-term financial aid package. Additionally, after the U.S. sanctioned Iran in 1979, the country gave military aid to Iraq in the Iran-Iraq War, despite Iraq's unpopularity among American politicians. Furthermore, the United States has historically placed embargoes on Middle Eastern nations such as Iran for not promoting U.S. friendly policy, resulting in massive disruptions to the international oil trade. In addition, George H.W. Bush is still in the early days of his presidency and is especially focused on foreign affairs.

Points of Consideration

Below are some themes, ideas, and terminology pertaining to the actual Gulf War. **PROCEED WITH CAUTION:** Delegates may use this information to inform their own understanding of the the Gulf War, but do not treat this information as fact.

Operation Desert Shield was the first phase of the Gulf War wherein the U.S. led military coalition built up forces from August 7, 1990 to January 17, 1991. During this time Saudi Arabian forces also launched a defense.

Operation Desert Storm was the second phase of the Gulf War beginning on January 17, 1991 when U.S. forces destroyed Iraqi radar sites in Baghdad and ending on February 28, 1991 with the '100 Hour War' land offensive that ended Iraqi occupation in Kuwait.

Republic of Kuwait was the name given to the government set up during the Iraqi annexation of Kuwait. Considered a puppet state of Iraq, the Republic of Kuwait supplanted Kuwait's traditional monarchical government which fled to Saudi Arabia in exile. Under Iraqi occupation, Kuwait was governed in two districts: Saddamiyat al-Mitla' in the north and the Kuwait Governorate to the south.

Resolution 678 describes the UNSC resolution which authorized a 42 country coalition to fight against and liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation. Primary contributors include the United States, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Kuwait (in exile).

Current Situation

In the year 1990, prior to the invasion of Kuwait, states throughout the Middle East were not expecting an invasion to occur. They were, however, well aware of the escalating tensions between Kuwait and Iraq, as these tensions were felt throughout the region. Iraq had publicly accused Kuwait of exceeding the established OPEC oil production quotas, thus taking away from Iraq's ability to profit off oil, which was the foundation of its economy. Saddam Hussein went further to claim that Kuwait was engaging in "economic warfare" against Iraq, further placing the two nations at odds with one another. Beyond this, Iraq asked for assistance from surrounding nations in the form of financial support to pay off its debts incurred during the Iran-Iraq War. While other nations obliged, Kuwait refused to forgive Iraq's debt and expected them to pay it off without their support. These two concerns both stemmed from economic issues, particularly surrounding the role of oil.

Iraq also disagreed with Kuwait's borders and independence. Iraq and Kuwait previously had multiple border disputes regarding various oil fields and islands within the Persian Gulf. Beyond this, Iraqi leaders claimed that Kuwait was historically a part of Iraq and that it should remain so. Border disputes therefore were complicated in that there were specific points of access being disputed as well as the fundamental right for Kuwait to have its own territory. Beyond these tensions, there was evidence pointing towards military build-up at the Iraq-Kuwait border. The United States witnessed these increasing tensions and the growing militarization and urged the international community to support diplomatic initiatives between the two countries. Diplomatic efforts however have not been successful in quelling the disputes or decreasing militarization, leading the international community to fear continued escalation. Therefore, it is up to this committee to respond to these increasing tensions and to determine the best course of action to prevent further wars in the region.

Questions to Consider

1. What actions can the Arab League Joint Defense Council take to mitigate the increasing tensions and potential escalation of conflict between Kuwait and Iraq?
2. How can territorial and economic disputes be alleviated without taking militaristic action?
3. What is the role of the United States in this conflict? Should the U.S. be allowed to continue trying to facilitate diplomacy, or should Arab League member states take that role instead?
4. How can the Arab League respond to the ongoing downstream effects of the Iran-Iraq War?
5. What factors have made previous diplomatic efforts involving Iraq and Kuwait fail? How can diplomacy be approached with these factors in mind?

Dossier

Bahrain

Egypt

Iraq

Jordan

Kuwait

Lebanon

Libya

Morocco

Palestine

Qatar

Saudi Arabia

Somalia

Syria

Tunisia

United Arab Emirates

Yemen

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