

# Background Guide

# HUNSC



**AIMUN**

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*A man must elevate himself*

# **Letter from the Executive Board**

## **Greetings Delegates!**

On behalf of the Executive Board, we extend our warmest welcome to the Committee on Historic United Nations Security Council. We are thrilled to convene to discuss one of the most pivotal moments in international history, the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956.

The Suez Canal Crisis marked a turning point in global diplomacy and tested the principles of international cooperation and sovereignty. As delegates, you are tasked with navigating the complexities of this historical event with diplomacy, tact, and a commitment to finding lasting solutions that resonate with the values and challenges of the time.

Note delegates, that the freeze date given is “1st November 1956”, as mentioned on the timeline itself further into the BG. All historical events after this date are null and void and should not be referred to, moreover any document/law/policy change done after this date shall also not be referenced.

This Guide has been prepared with a view to give the delegates a platform from which to start their research, that is, this Guide only functions as a good starting point for your research. This also means that your research should not be limited to only reading the Background Guide, but to take it as only a foundation on which to build up your future research. So, we suggest you all to not see this as an end in itself in terms of preparation. Rather, going beyond the scope of this Guide is not only suggested, but also a necessity if you wish to perform well. The guide is divided into several subsections, with links for further research. Kindly go through the same.

We encourage each delegate to delve deeply into the intricacies of the crisis, considering the perspectives of all stakeholders involved. Your insights and resolutions will shape the course of this simulation and contribute to a deeper understanding of international relations.

We wish you fruitful deliberations and productive debates throughout the session. Remember, your contributions today will shape the world of tomorrow.

Warm regards,

Parth Katoch  
Chairperson

Tej Nanda  
Vice Chairperson

Aryaman Mehra  
Rapporteur

## What is the Security Council?

### **Mandate**

The UN Charter established six main organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council. It gives primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council, which may meet whenever peace is threatened.

According to the Charter, the United Nations has four purposes:

- to maintain international peace and security;
- to develop friendly relations among nations;
- to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights;
- to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations.

All members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. While other organs of the United Nations make recommendations to member states, only the Security Council has the power to make decisions that member states are then obligated to implement under the Charter.

### **Maintaining Peace and Security**

When a complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council's first action is usually to recommend that the parties try to reach agreement by peaceful means. The Council may:

- set forth principles for such an agreement;
- undertake investigation and mediation, in some cases;
- dispatch a mission;
- appoint special envoys; or
- request the Secretary-General to use his good offices to achieve a pacific settlement of the dispute.

When a dispute leads to hostilities, the Council's primary concern is to bring them to an end as soon as possible. In that case, the Council may:

- issue ceasefire directives that can help prevent an escalation of the conflict;
- dispatch military observers or a peacekeeping force to help reduce tensions, separate opposing forces and establish a calm in which peaceful settlements may be sought.

Beyond this, the Council may opt for enforcement measures, including:

- economic sanctions, arms embargoes, financial penalties and restrictions, and travel bans;

- severance of diplomatic relations;
- Blockade;
- or even collective military action.

A chief concern is to focus action on those responsible for the policies or practices condemned by the international community, while minimizing the impact of the measures taken on other parts of the population and economy.

### **Organization**

The Security Council held its first session on 17 January 1946 at Church House, Westminster, London. Since its first meeting, the Security Council has taken permanent residence at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. It also traveled to many cities, holding sessions in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1972, in Panama City, Panama, and in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1990. A representative of each of its members must be present at all times at UN Headquarters so that the Security Council can meet at any time as the need arises.

**Link:** <http://www.un.org/en/sc/about>

## **How to prepare for the committee?**

One of the major misconceptions about the concept of MUN's is that you just research from the internet and speak in the committee. However that's not the only thing you do, you are required to research for the committee AND ANALYZE whatever you've studied.

When it comes to the term analysis, a lot of people don't know what it means so for example:

You see someone's mark sheet and see that person has scored 90+ out of 100 in 4 out of 5 subjects however in the 5th subject, the person has scored just 53 out of 100. The part till here is called your research, this is something you've found out by searching somewhere.

When it comes to analysis, analysis means interpretation, now for example in the above example a good analysis would be finding out that the person if gives more time to the 5th subject rather spending so much time on other subjects, his/her marks in the individual subjects might fall a bit but he/she would improve overall because now that person would be scoring well in 5th subject as well.

On a MUN level; analysis is a very important aspect when it comes to you playing the role of a delegate in a committee. Most delegates get confused by the term analysis and are not able to improve the quality of their analysis overtime. In very simple words, "Analysis means interpreting the research you have from your perspective". The reason analysis is an important aspect of a MUN is because, without analyzing the current research you can't progress towards development but can only dwell upon the already existing research.

Before that, let's understand what does your analysis include? When you start analysis, you need to keep the following things in mind:

- **Context**: What is the context of your analysis? Basically, what are you analyzing? What is it related to?
- **Stakeholders**: Who/What are driving your research and playing a major role? Who are the relevant members to your research?
- **Impact**: What impact will your research have on the agenda? What role will it play on the stakeholders of the research you have regarding the agenda?
- **Scope of Solution Space**: What all solutions can be formulated to tackle the problem?
- **Constraints within solution**: The solutions formulated in the solution space would have a few constraints, what are those? And can they be tackled or is there any way around?

- Key Insights: What is the final conclusion or key takeaways you have from the analysis you've done regarding your agenda?

The above are the key points which are included in the concept named "Analysis". If you are able to find answers to the above points regarding your research you'll have an easier time going with the research and trying to understand the agenda.

For a sample example let's take the 2018 North Korea–United States Summit in Singapore being discussed in General Assembly on an agenda related to nuclear weapons;

Now let's draw out the line from this case:

**Context:** The context in this case would be that the summit had a few major decisions regarding the nuclear weapons in Korean Peninsula hence it's relevant to the agenda; to elaborate more upon the context one would go into detail of what has been promised by both the states regarding Nuclear weapons.

**Stakeholders:** The stakeholders in this case would be; USA, North Korea, South Korea majorly; but you can come with other stakeholders as well when you research further upon what bodies can play a role in this agenda, for example IAEA or P5 members of UNSC especially China

**Impact:** So if the plans according to summit go well, we can have a nuclear weapon free Korean Peninsula and a threat to a nuclear war might reduce; the nuclear resources used for making weapons can be used for other purposes which can be elaborated upon

**Scope of Solution Space:** The scope of solution space can be very broad this case; it can start from seeking help from IAEA, drafting a treaty similar to NEW START treaty, Inclusion of DPRK in NPT (again), discussing the sanctions on DPRK etc.

**Constraints within Solution:** The terms and conditions of the agreement; Time; feasibility, POLICY RESTRICTIONS (applicable for all agendas), existing sanction on DPRK, Non-membership of DPRK in NPT

**Key Insights:** One of the major key insight in this topic would be that how a major decision to disarm the nuclear weapons in Korean peninsula has been taken; how policies for both DPRK and USA have changed; How South Korea's relations have been affected with USA; How USA is talking about disarming nuclear weapons in Korean Peninsula but on the contrary also backing out from Iran Nuclear Deal; These are just few of the many key insight which could be taken from the topic

The above example also misses out on a lot of aspects in terms of analyzing the topic, for example if researched further one can find relevance of China in this agreement as well.

In simple language, analysis means to interpret and understand what you've researched and being able to present it as an argument in the committee which will help in the flow of the debate.

## **How to research?**

Whenever you start your research, first try understanding the meaning of research and what you plan to do in the committee. In our case try understanding Cybercrime, right to privacy and cyber warfare as basic terms followed by understanding the legal aspects of digital privacy.

Write the agenda somewhere on your electronic device or a notepad and try to break it into parts. As you break it into parts try coming up with topics which can be discussed in the committee. After writing the agenda and breaking it down further, search about the sub-topics on the internet and find more information such as legal aspects, government implications etc. It's not necessary that you are able to find your subtopics without starting your basic research, as you start your basic research you'll be coming across problems which are being faced across the world from which you can derive your sub topics.

After coming up with your topics and researching them; find out what all other committees and bodies exist (National and international both) which are taking actions on this agenda. In our case, online campaigns on the agendas can be also considered to provide solutions. Go through the reports, suggestions, and actions taken by those bodies and those given in national and UN documents, for example the Secretary General Report till date, on the agenda and try to analyze the problem and solution both and give your own input.

After going through the National and International reports, do go thru the secretary general report on the agenda which'll tell you about ALL the progress which has been related to the agenda.

After you're done with the above things, try to pick up case studies and find the problems in it and how can they be improved (which'll test your analytical skills) and being able to implement the solution for that problem will help you in your application skills.

The above is just one of the many ways of research, and one can differ as well. But in the end, just ensure that you understand what the agenda means and what all requires to be done in order to have a successful result.

Valid source of proof in the committee

Evidence or proof is from the following sources will be accepted as credible in the UNSC:



1. State-operated News Agencies: These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any country as such but in that situation, they can be denied by any other country in the council. Some examples are RIA Novosti (Russia), IRNA (Iran), BBC (UK), Al Jazeera (Qatar), and Xinhua News Agency (PR China).
2. Government Reports: These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country. However, a nuance is that a report that is being denied by a certain country can still be accepted by the Executive Board as credible information. Some examples are:
  - Government Websites like the State Department of the United States of America or the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation
  - Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various nations like India or People's Republic of China
  - Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Reports
  - Multilateral Organizations like the NATO, ASEAN, OPEC etc.
3. United Nations Reports: All UN Reports are considered credible information or evidence for the Executive Board of the UNGA.
  - UN Bodies like the UNSC or UNGA
  - UN Affiliated Bodies like the International Atomic Energy Agency, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, International Committee of the Red Cross etc.
  - Treaty Based Bodies like the Antarctic Treaty System, the International Criminal Court

## **NOTE**

Sources like Wikipedia, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch or newspapers like the Guardian, Times of India etc. are typically not accepted as PROOF/ EVIDENCE. However, they can be used for better understanding of any issue or on rare occasions, be brought up in debate if the information given in such sources is in line with the beliefs of a Government.

Further, the information submitted as evidence citing reportage from sources such as specified in this note may be at best, treated as having significance in terms of persuasive value - e.g. to cement one's assertions, but

## HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

The Historical Committee is about re-enacting past conflicts and issues in order to find alternative possible diplomatic solutions different to the real outcomes. We have a knowledge of the outcome of the crisis (and the delegates know it, if they are prepared).

But they should intervene with the mind of a delegate who does not know what has happened after the crisis situation. The outcome could be positive or negative for the world or for the countries involved and the delegates should think about alternatives to the real historic development.

It is necessary to bear in mind that some countries may have had different names or policies during that time if compared to what their position is today (Laos, for instance, had a tendency to follow a neutral course concerning the two blocks (USA and USSR) and officially became part of the non-aligned movement in 1964).

Obviously, the debate will take place as if we were in that moment of crisis, specifically. Still nowadays some aspects are not so clear, as they were dim also in that time. But this is exactly what happens in our time. It is often not so easy to determine who is the protagonist of actions in debate (e.g.: in the case of bomb attacks. terrorists? secret services? mercenaries?).

For our committee the **FREEZE DATE TAKEN IS 1ST NOVEMBER 1956**. This means that we would be imagining ourselves sitting as representatives of different countries on this very day, keeping in mind what happened previously in the past (especially the last few days), besides a clarity would be provided in the timeline section of the background guide.

**Note:** All resolutions, laws, decisions of different stake holders **WOULD NOT BE** considered as for our simulation, those events haven't taken place, hence a law such as The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which was adopted by UNGA in 1966 would not be considered and cannot be used as a basis for your argument and cannot be quoted as a document as, it doesn't exist in 1956.

# Introduction to the Agenda

## THE CONTEXT OF THE COLD WAR

During World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union fought together as allies against the Axis powers. However, the relationship between the two nations was a tense one. Americans had long been wary of Soviet communism and concerned about Russian leader Joseph Stalin's rule of his own country. For their part, the Soviets resented the Americans' decades-long refusal to treat the USSR as a legitimate part of the international community as well as their delayed entry into World War II, which resulted in the deaths of tens of millions of Russians.

After the war ended, these grievances ripened into an overwhelming sense of mutual distrust and enmity. Postwar Soviet expansionism in Eastern Europe fueled many Americans' fears of a Russian plan to control the world. Meanwhile, the USSR came to resent what they perceived as American officials' bellicose rhetoric, arms buildup and interventionist approach to international relations. In such a hostile atmosphere, no single party was entirely to blame for the Cold War; in fact, some historians believe it was inevitable.

**New protagonists: New independent states: People's Republic of China, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, the African colonies,...**

There was no one process of decolonization. In some areas, it was peaceful, and orderly. In many others, independence was achieved only after a protracted revolution. A few newly independent countries acquired stable governments almost immediately; others were ruled by dictators or military juntas for decades, or endured long civil wars. Some European governments welcomed a new relationship with their former colonies; others contested decolonization militarily. The process of had a definite impact on the evolution of that competition. It also significantly changed the pattern of international relations in a more general sense.

The creation of so many new countries, some of which occupied strategic locations, others of which possessed significant natural resources, and most of which were desperately poor, altered the composition of the United Nations and political complexity of every region of the globe. In the mid to late 19th century, the European powers colonized much of Africa and Southeast Asia. During the decades of imperialism, the industrializing powers of Europe viewed the African and Asian continents as reservoirs of raw materials, labor, and territory for future settlement.

In most cases, however, significant development and European settlement in these colonies was sporadic. However, the colonies were exploited, sometimes brutally, for natural and labor

resources, and sometimes even for military conscripts. In addition, the introduction of colonial rule drew arbitrary natural boundaries where none had existed before, dividing ethnic and linguistic groups and natural features, and laying the foundation for the creation of numerous states lacking geographic, linguistic, ethnic, or political affinity.

While the United States generally supported the concept of national self-determination, it also had strong ties to its European allies, who had imperial claims on their former colonies. The Cold War only served to complicate the U.S. position, as U.S. support for decolonization was offset by American concern over communist expansion and Soviet strategic ambitions in Europe. Several of the NATO allies asserted that their colonial possessions provided them with economic and military strength that would otherwise be lost to the alliance. Nearly all of the United States' European allies believed that after their recovery from World War II their colonies would finally provide the combination of raw materials and protected markets for finished goods that would cement the colonies to Europe.

Whether or not this was the case, the alternative of allowing the colonies to slip away, perhaps into the United States' economic sphere or that of another power, was unappealing to every European government interested in postwar stability. However, as the Cold War competition with the Soviet Union came to dominate U.S. foreign policy concerns in the late 1940s and 1950s, the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations grew increasingly concerned that as the European powers lost their colonies or granted them independence, Soviet-supported communist parties might achieve power in the new states. This might serve to shift the international balance of power in favor of the Soviet Union and remove access to economic resources from U.S. allies. Events such as the Indonesian struggle for independence from the Netherlands (1945–50), the Vietnamese war against France (1945–54), and the nationalist and professed socialist takeovers of Egypt (1952) and Iran (1951) served to reinforce such fears, even if new governments did not directly link themselves to the Soviet Union.

Thus, the United States used aid packages, technical assistance and sometimes even military intervention to encourage newly independent nations in the Third World to adopt governments that aligned with the West. The Soviet Union deployed similar tactics in an effort to encourage new nations to join the communist bloc, and attempted to convince newly decolonized countries that communism was an intrinsically non-imperialist economic and political ideology. Many of the new nations resisted the pressure to be drawn into the Cold War, joined in the “nonaligned movement,” which formed after the Bandung conference of 1955, and focused on internal development. The newly independent nations that emerged in the 1950s and the 1960s became an important factor in changing the balance of power within the United Nations. In 1946, there were 35 member states in the United Nations; as the newly independent nations of the “third world” joined the organization, by 1970 membership had swelled to 127.

These new member states had a few characteristics in common; they were non-white, with developing economies, facing internal problems that were the result of their colonial past, which sometimes put them at odds with European countries and made them suspicious of European-style governmental structures, political ideas, and economic institutions. These countries also became vocal advocates of continuing decolonization, with the result that the UN Assembly was often ahead of the Security Council on issues of self-governance and decolonization. The new nations pushed the UN toward accepting resolutions for independence for colonial states and creating a special committee on colonialism, demonstrating that even though some nations continued to struggle for independence, in the eyes of the international community, the colonial era was ending.

<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/asia-and-africa>

Concerning the Korean question Note: This report will not take into account all the events happened after the invasion of the Republic of Korea by the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, so the delegates will not have to consider all those events that came after. Note: The delegation of People's Democratic Republic of Korea and the republic of Korea were not part of the UN at that time so they will not be present during the debate.

**Note:** Delegates should consider that due to the lack, both in terms of reliability and quantity of information from the North Korean/Soviet point of view, the majority of sources used in this paper are either coming from the US or its allies. For this reason this paper might be considered biased and leaning towards the american/western history of the events that led to the conflict. This possible bias is **not the result of the point of view of the Chair**, rather than a consequence of the sources available to the general public.

## About the Agenda

The Suez Canal is a critical strategic and economic area: it connects the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, the canal has always been a trade route between the European continent and the East and oil tankers from the Middle East headed towards Europe travelled through the canal.

We ask you to bear the time period in mind while conducting your research and to stick firmly to your country's policy of the 1950s. You may use the real events of the crisis to inform your choices in the committee. However, we encourage you to embrace the challenge of creating a new path for history in your own vision, for better or for worse.

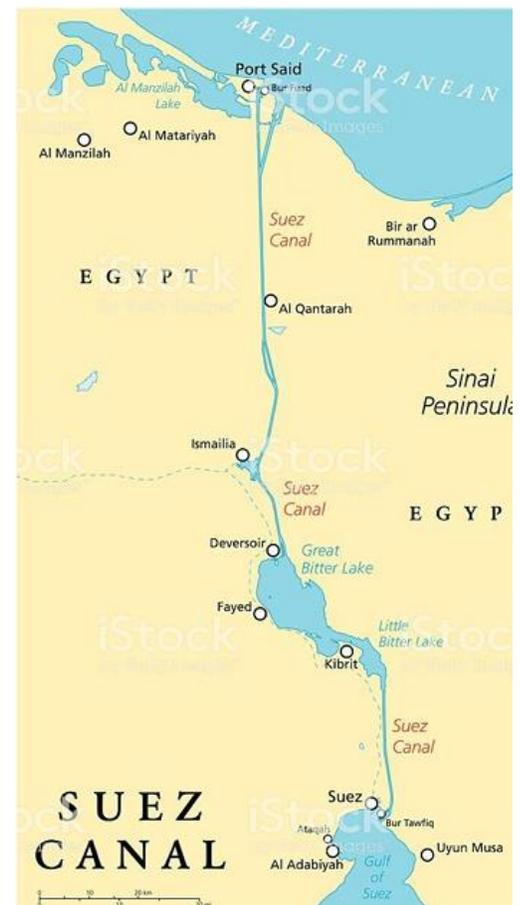
## History

The Suez Canal was proposed as a project to Mohamed Said, the Viceroy of Egypt, by French former diplomat Ferdinand de Lesseps in 1854. He aimed to create a link between two different parts of the world and, consequently, to ease the trade. Despite the colonial influence in the region, Britain even boycotted the construction of the canal, but in the end the Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli purchased the shares for £400,000.

<http://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/egypt.htm>

**Opening and Early Years (1869-1875):** The Suez Canal, officially opened in 1869 after a decade of negotiations and construction, was a joint venture between France and Egypt. The Suez Canal Company, chartered in Egypt and controlled primarily by French shareholders, held equal stock between French investors and Sa'id Pasha, Egypt's Wāli. This partnership marked the Canal as a collaborative infrastructure project.

**British Acquisition and Control (1875-1882):** In 1875, facing financial difficulties, Egypt's Isma'il Pasha sold his shares of the Suez Canal to the British, who acquired a significant 44% stake. This acquisition set the stage for Britain's eventual control over Egypt, culminating in the 1882 invasion and the establishment of British influence in the region.



**Geopolitical Significance (Late 19th - Early 20th Century):** By the late 19th century, the Suez Canal became crucial for global trade, serving as a key route between the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. It was leveraged strategically during conflicts like the Russo-Japanese War and World War I, highlighting its role as a vital geopolitical asset.

### **Domestic Considerations: Anti-Westernism and the 1952 Egyptian Revolution**

**Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood:** Founded in 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood initially focused on social welfare but quickly became a significant political force due to its large membership and anti-Western sentiments. By 1948, it had around half a million members, reflecting widespread anti-Western sentiment among Egyptians.

**Free Officers' Movement:** The Free Officers' Movement, including future President Gamal Abdel Nasser, opposed British influence and sought to end the monarchy. By 1952, this movement had the momentum to stage a coup, overthrowing King Farouk and establishing Egypt as a republic.

**Termination of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty (1951):** In 1951, Egypt terminated the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, leading to British military intervention and violent clashes. This intensified anti-Western sentiments and facilitated the Free Officers' Movement's rise to power.

**Gamal Abdel Nasser's Ascendancy:** In 1954, Nasser replaced President Naguib and implemented a policy of non-alignment, aiming to balance relationships with both the Eastern and Western blocs. Despite his attempts at diplomacy, his stance on non-alignment was seen by some as a tactical maneuver rather than a genuine policy.

**Aswan High Dam and International Reactions:** Nasser's push for the Aswan High Dam faced challenges due to the withdrawal of U.S. support and strained relations with the Soviets. His support for the Algerian revolution and strained ties with Western nations led to his decision to nationalize the Suez Canal in 1956, asserting Egyptian sovereignty and challenging colonial powers.

## **Suez Canal Convention 1888**

The **Suez Canal Convention of 1888** was a pivotal international agreement that established the legal framework for the operation and neutrality of the Suez Canal. Opened in 1869, the Suez Canal rapidly became a crucial maritime route, connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea and significantly shortening the journey between Europe and Asia. Given its strategic importance, there was a growing need for an international accord to regulate its use and ensure its neutrality amid global tensions.

One of the central provisions of the convention was the declaration of the canal as a neutral zone. This meant that, regardless of the political or military situation, the canal would remain open to ships from all nations. The aim was to prevent any country from using the canal as a strategic asset during conflicts. The guarantee of free passage was crucial for maintaining global trade routes and ensuring that commercial vessels from any nation could traverse the canal without obstruction.

The convention also addressed the control and administration of the canal. While it remained under Egyptian control, the agreement imposed specific obligations on Egypt to uphold the canal's neutrality and ensure its uninterrupted operation. This administrative arrangement was designed to balance Egyptian sovereignty with the need for international access and security.

To resolve disputes related to the canal, the convention established mechanisms for arbitration. An international commission was designated to handle conflicts concerning the neutrality or access of the canal, providing a structured way to address and mitigate disputes.

The significance of the Suez Canal Convention of 1888 lay in its recognition of the canal's global importance. By establishing its neutrality, the agreement ensured that the canal could serve international trade without being impeded by geopolitical conflicts. The principles enshrined in the convention continued to influence international maritime law and the management of strategic waterways, including during the Suez Crisis of 1956. Overall, the convention was a landmark in diplomatic and legal efforts to maintain open and neutral access to vital global trade routes.

## **Tensions in the area (Arab-Israeli Conflict)**

The 1947 UN Special Committee on Palestine suggested the division of Palestine into an Arab State, a Jewish State and the city of Jerusalem under international administration, to be implemented by Britain. Arab States refused to accept that arrangement and Britain refused to implement a resolution which was not supported by both parties.





On the day of Britain's withdrawal, David Ben-Gurion announced the independence of the State of Israel of which he became the Prime Minister. The following day, Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Transjordan intervened on behalf of the Arab League and caused the beginning of the Arab-Israeli War. The Israeli army was able to resist the forces launched against them and won the offensive. Later the State of Israel was admitted to the United Nations.

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/modern/suez\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/modern/suez_01.shtml)

<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/arab-israeli-war>



## **British semi-Colonial relations with Egypt**

Trade links have existed between the two countries for long. British military and political interest in Egypt, however, became obvious in the Nineteenth Century. The Suez Canal allowed Britain an easy access to its colonies and after the outbreak of World War I, Britain declared Egypt an official protectorate. Britain and Indian troops were authorised to remain in the Suez Canal until 1956, when they were set to be examined and if necessary, removed. In 1951 Nahas Pasha, leader of the Nationalist Party, revoked the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 and the British military post was attacked.

King Farouk of Egypt was replaced after a military coup and General Mohammed Neguib seized power and in 1954 Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser replaced General Neguib. In 1956 Egypt accepted to respect the freedom of navigation of Britain through the canal and it was agreed that British troops would be allowed to return in case of threat by an outside power. On October 29, 1956, Israeli armed forces pushed into Egypt toward the Suez Canal, after Egyptian President Nasser nationalised the canal in July of the same year, initiating the Suez Crisis. Two days later, the Israelis were joined by French and British forces. The Soviet Union was eager to exploit Arab nationalism and gain a foothold in the Middle East and therefore it supplied arms from Czechoslovakia beginning in 1955.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2001/mar/14/past.education1>

<http://www.history.com/>

## **Egyptian Nonalignment Policy**

After seizing the power in 1954, Nasser pursued an international approach of nonalignment. His idea was to balance both the United States and its allies and at the same time favour the potential relationship with the Soviet Union block. Moreover, one of his most ambitious projects was Aswan Dam and he was seeking funding from both the West and the Soviet Union.

<http://www.history.com/>

## **Nationalisation**

The modern canal was opened in 1869. The 106-mile stretch offered trading ships the shortest route from Europe to Asia - dramatically cutting the journey around the Cape of Good Hope. It was financed by the French and Egyptian governments but operated by an Egyptian-chartered company. In 1875 the operator went bust and sold his 44pc stake in the canal to the British Government. The Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, agreed to pay £4m for the stake while the rest was owned by French investors.

In 1882, Britain took defacto control of Egypt and the canal's operations. It became of vital strategic importance to Britain as the empire grew and then throughout both World Wars. In 1956, Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalised the canal by buying its shares, provoking the Suez Crisis. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/8292819/Suez-a-trading-history.html>



## **Suez Crisis**

In the fall of 1956, Egypt faced the combined armed forces of three countries – Britain, France and Israel – on both sides of the Sinai Peninsula, in what is often called the Suez Crisis. Their Egyptian opponents were regular soldiers, policemen, militiamen and women, Muslim Brotherhood and Palestinian guerrillas, and civilian partisans.

Britain, France and Israel all saw Egypt as a common enemy. Egypt had just seized control of the Suez Canal from Britain and France, threatening their access to Asian colonies. President Nasser was also helping Algeria in its war against French rule. Israel felt threatened by Egypt's build up of Soviet arms and its sponsoring of attacks by Palestinian guerrillas. Israel invaded Egypt's Sinai Peninsula on 29 October, and the British and French, acting as silent partners, then used this pretext to intervene. Their target was Port Said and they began bombing campaign to force the reopening of the Canal. Nasser responds by sinking 40 ships to block the canal. Anglo-French airstrikes began on 1 November, wiping out the Egyptian Air Force and pounding targets around Port Said and across Egypt. On October 29, 1956 the Israelis launched Operation Kadesh and invaded the Sinai. The British and French joined the hostilities on October 31 with Operation Musketeer which involved bombing and land invasions.

<https://www.warhistoryonline.com/guest-bloggers/martyr-city-egyptian-civilians.html>

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/5194576.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/5194576.stm)



## Time line

- **1869:** The Suez Canal officially opens on February 17. It was a joint French-Egyptian venture, with control shared between French investors and Egyptian authorities.
- **1875:** Egypt, facing financial strain, sells its 44% share in the Suez Canal to the British, solidifying British influence over the Canal.
- **1882:** The United Kingdom invades Egypt in September to protect its interests in the Suez Canal. This marks the beginning of British control over Egypt and the Canal.
- **1951 (October 19):** The Egyptian government announces the termination of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, which had allowed British troops to remain in Egypt to protect the Canal.
- **1952 (July 23):** The Free Officers' Movement, led by Gamal Abdel Nasser, orchestrates a coup d'état that deposes King Farouk and establishes a republic under General Muhammad Naguib, with Nasser as a prominent leader.
- **1954 (June 18):** President Naguib is ousted in a power struggle, and Gamal Abdel Nasser becomes the President of Egypt. Nasser begins to promote a policy of non-alignment.

- **1955 (March 1):** Nasser announces his intention to build the Aswan High Dam, a major infrastructure project. He seeks financial assistance from the United States and the Soviet Union, using Egypt's strategic importance to leverage support.
- **1956 (July 19):** Nasser nationalizes the Suez Canal, taking control from the Suez Canal Company and angering Britain and France, who had significant commercial and strategic interests in the Canal.
- **1956 (October 29):** Israel initiates Operation Kadesh, launching an attack on the Sinai Peninsula and advancing towards the Canal, in collaboration with Britain and France.
- **1956 (October 30):** Affecting to be alarmed by the threat of fighting along the Suez Canal, the UK and France issued a twelve-hour ultimatum on 30 October to the Israelis and the Egyptians to cease fighting. When, as expected, no response was given, Operation Musketeer was launched.
- **1956 (October 31):** Britain and France, in response to the situation, commence Operation Musketeer, a military campaign involving air strikes and a naval blockade to regain control over the Canal.
- **1956 (November 1st):** The UNSC meets in an emergency meeting to discuss the situation in Egypt and to stop the further expansion of crisis at hand.

**Note:** All events in history after 1st November 1956 would not be taken

## **Bloc Positions in the UNSC (1956)**

### **Western Bloc**

The Western Bloc in 1956 comprised the United Kingdom, United States, France, Australia, and Belgium. These nations were key actors in the Tripartite Invasion of Egypt, launched alongside Israel. The primary motivation for this bloc was to maintain control over the Suez Canal, a critical maritime route for global trade and a symbol of Western influence in the Middle East. The invasion was partly driven by concerns over the nationalization of the canal by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, which threatened Western economic interests and geopolitical influence in the region. The Western Bloc aimed to manage the crisis while avoiding a broader conflict, as the aftermath of World War II had left these countries wary of further global conflict. Their strategy involved balancing the preservation of commercial and geopolitical advantages with the need to navigate international condemnation and potential escalation.

### **Eastern Bloc**

The Eastern Bloc, led by the Soviet Union and China, along with allies such as Algeria and Cuba, presented a unified opposition to the Tripartite Invasion. For the Soviet Union, the invasion represented a blatant act of neocolonialism that threatened the principles of nationalization and state ownership that were central to Soviet ideology. The Soviets viewed the

invasion as part of a broader pattern of Western aggression and sought to counteract it by mobilizing diplomatic and, implicitly, military threats. The USSR's response included threatening military action and issuing stern warnings to the invading powers. Meanwhile, China, under the leadership of Premier Zhou Enlai, provided financial aid to Egypt and supported Nasser's regime as part of its broader strategy to align with anti-colonial movements and strengthen its global influence. China's involvement also aimed to reinforce its position as a rising communist power and to counter Western influence in the Middle East.

### **Non-Aligned Bloc**

The Non-Aligned Bloc, which included nations such as Colombia, Iran, Iraq, Peru, the Philippines, and Yugoslavia, played a significant role in the Suez Canal Crisis by advocating for Egyptian sovereignty and condemning the invasion by the Western powers. This bloc, led by prominent figures like India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, sought to maintain their independence from both the Western and Eastern Blocs' influences. The Non-Aligned nations viewed the invasion as a stark example of neocolonialism and a violation of international law. They rallied behind Egypt, emphasizing the principles of non-interference and self-determination. The support from the Non-Aligned Bloc highlighted their commitment to anti-colonialism and a peaceful resolution to international conflicts, setting a precedent for the movement's role in global diplomacy.

# Recommendations from the Executive Board

**Dear Delegates,**

As we proceed with discussions surrounding the Suez Canal Crisis, it is crucial that we, as a committee, shift our focus toward shaping the future through comprehensive policy-making. While understanding the events leading up to our freeze date of 1st November 1956 remains essential, the true challenge before us is to craft policies that can reshape the course of the crisis moving forward.

The historical context offers us valuable insights, but it is our mandate to think beyond mere analysis of what has already transpired. Instead, we must emphasize how, from this point forward, we will address the ongoing geopolitical tensions, redefine alliances, and propose strategies that can ensure stability in the region. The international community is watching, and it is imperative that the policies we propose reflect not only our understanding of the crisis but also our ability to proactively navigate through it.

To that end, we encourage all of you to think critically about how we can resolve the core issues surrounding the nationalization of the canal, maintain international trade routes, and manage the delicate balance of power in the Middle East. Let us explore avenues for diplomatic engagement, economic sanctions, military strategies, and multilateral agreements that will offer tangible solutions to prevent further escalation.

The significance of this committee lies in its ability to influence not only the current crisis but also the larger international order. As delegates, your proposals will serve as a blueprint for global peace and cooperation. Our goal is to transition from retrospective debate into forward-thinking crisis management. With the freeze date in place, we are uniquely positioned to consider:

1. **Policy Recommendations:** What measures can be adopted to de-escalate the situation while ensuring that the interests of all key stakeholders, including Egypt, Israel, France, the United Kingdom, and the broader international community, are taken into account?
2. **Long-Term Solutions:** What policies can we propose to prevent future crises of a similar nature? How can the committee redefine international governance over strategically vital assets like the Suez Canal?
3. **Diplomatic Innovation:** How can we as a committee introduce new mechanisms for diplomatic engagement, negotiation, and conflict resolution that might have avoided military confrontation or ensured a more equitable post-crisis environment?

Remember, the outcome of this crisis lies in our hands, and it is our responsibility to shape a future that prioritizes peace, stability, and the collective interests of the international community.

## Questions to Consider

1. What are the immediate military and strategic objectives of the Tripartite Alliance (UK, France, Israel) in the Suez Canal Crisis?
2. What strategic interests do the United States and the Soviet Union have in the crisis, and how are they influencing the situation?
3. How does the nationalization of the Suez Canal by Egypt impact the balance of power in the Middle East?
4. How effective is the United Nations in addressing the crisis as of November 1, 1956?
5. What role is the Non-Aligned Movement playing in the crisis, and how is it influencing the international response?
6. How are colonial legacies influencing the actions and foreign policies of the UK and France in the crisis?
7. What are the current military capabilities and positions of the forces involved in the crisis?
8. What logistical and operational challenges are faced by the Tripartite Alliance in their military campaign?
9. What is the status of the Suez Canal's operation, and how is it affecting global shipping and trade?
10. What are the economic impacts of the crisis on global trade and oil supplies?
11. What are the humanitarian consequences of the conflict for civilians in Egypt and the surrounding region?
12. How does the Suez Canal Crisis challenge the principles established by the Suez Canal Convention of 1888?
13. What are the potential long-term consequences of the crisis for international relations and regional stability?

## **Suggestive Further Reading**

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18. Oxford University Press: The Arab Cold War - <https://www.oxforduniversitypress.com>
19. Council on Foreign Relations: Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood - <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/egypts-muslim-brotherhood>
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