



CIMUN
CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL
MODEL UNITED NATIONS



U.S. Mission to the OAS¹



OAS²

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES:
Background Guide
Chicago International Model United Nations XXIII

¹ <https://usoas.usmission.gov/organization-of-american-states-headquarters/>

² https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flag_of_the_Organization_of_American_States.svg



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LETTER FROM THE CIMUN XXIII STAFF

Dear Delegate,

Welcome to the twenty-third Chicago International Model United Nations, better known as CIMUN XXIII! Over the past year, our team of over one hundred college students and young professionals has worked to bring this year's CIMUN to life. We are excited to be able to deliver this background guide to you as a first look at what this year's conference has in store. We cannot wait to welcome you to Chicago this December for a spirited weekend of debate and diplomacy.

This guide will provide you with your committee's topics, our state of the world brief, advice to prepare for CIMUN, and our rules of procedure. We highly recommend that you read this guide thoroughly, as it contains information that will help you make the most of CIMUN this year.

To best prepare, please note the following details regarding your committee, the **Organization of American States, 1989**:

- CIMUN differs substantially from traditional Model UN conferences! We recommend that you pay attention to all portions of this guide. Knowledge of the state of the world and the details of our rules of procedure are key to success at CIMUN.
- Each committee and cabinet at CIMUN XXIII exists in the same shared universe, in the historical year of 1989. This means that every committee can interact with the others, and actions in one committee can impact the proceedings of another. **All committees share a start date of January 22, 1989.** (Please see the CIMUN XXIII Delegate Preparation Guide for further details, located in this background guide.)

Prior to the conference, we ask that you write **position papers** to aid in your research and preparation for CIMUN XXIII. (For more detailed information on writing position papers, please see the Delegate Preparation Guide in this background guide, or the position papers hub on cimun.org.)

- Each delegation should write **one white paper per topic and one black paper total**.
 - *White Papers* should outline the public-facing policy of your country or position. You will have the opportunity to read the White Papers of the other delegates in your committee prior to the conference.
 - *Black Papers* outline your country or position's strategic priorities and objectives. Black papers will be kept secret, only to be read by CIMUN staff.
- To be eligible for position paper awards, position papers are due on **November 22nd at 11:59 PM**. After that date, to be eligible for other awards, position papers must be



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submitted by **November 29th at 11:59 PM**. Delegates should submit their papers by emailing them to position.papers@cimun.org.

- Please note that CIMUN offers position paper awards. Only delegates who submit their position papers on time will be eligible for these awards.

If you have any questions regarding the information in this guide, please reach out to us at questions@cimun.org. We look forward to seeing you in Chicago on December 3rd!

Best Regards,

John Salchak

Secretary General - CIMUN XXIII



LETTER FROM THE UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL OF SIMULATIONS

Greetings Delegate,

My name is Andrew Kruck, and I'm happy to be returning as CIMUN's Under Secretary General for Simulations, and to welcome you to our 1989 historical simulation. With nine committees, eight cabinets, two Ad-Hoc Committees of the Secretary General, and the CIMUN Chronicle, this simulation integrates events from around the world at the very close of the Cold War. We cannot wait for you to arrive and take part.

Across the many committees and cabinets of CIMUN XXIII, you will be tasked with confronting a persistent, evolving, and integrated simulated world. The actions of every delegate have the potential to ripple out to every other delegate at our conference. Below, you will find your topic guides, and the state of the world document. I encourage you to read them carefully. From the moment you arrive this December to the moment the last gavel falls, we will all be immersing ourselves in the shifting and uncertain world of 1989. The better you understand that world and the countries that confronted it, the better prepared you will be to succeed in our simulation.

From the struggles of reform and resistance in the Soviet Bloc, to domestic conversations about patriotism and freedom in the United States, to the internal reforms of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the unique political and diplomatic situation of every country represented at our conference will shape how they respond to a year of upheaval and uncertainty. Your topic guides will serve as a primer for the specific issues your cabinet or committee plans to address, but remember: at any time, it is possible for a crisis to arise which requires any one of the bodies represented at CIMUN to react.

Distant as it may seem, 1989 is yesterday on the historical scale. In 1989, my parents were graduating from high school, and as they began their lives as adults, the tumultuous and world-altering events of this year were their greeting. In 2026, the feeling of an unstable and uncertain international order may be familiar. As you research this year and think about the various global issues that confronted leaders and citizens in 1989, I encourage you to speak to people in your life who remember the year first-hand. I also encourage you to think about the similarities between the issues that confronted the world in 1989, and those that confront the world in 2026. Ask yourself how leaders found solutions to their problems, and if they didn't, ask yourself why. Place yourself in the shoes of someone who sees the familiar world beginning to crumble around them.



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The problems you confront in 1989 will not be identical to the problems our world faces in 2026. But the way you approach those problems, the skills you employ in finding solutions, and the challenges you encounter in turning those solutions into agreements are the same as the approaches, skills, and challenges that world leaders encounter today. Consider what might have been done differently, how you would have acted with the information and under the pressures that faced leaders in 1989. Hopefully, you come away from this conference having learned about our historical year, but with ideas about how to confront the problems that face the world you live in now.

CIMUN will not present you a world with easy solutions, but I have full faith that you will work with (and against) each other to overcome the most dire challenges we place in front of you. I can't wait to see the world that you all create this December.

Sincerely,
Andrew Kruck
Under Secretary General for Simulations - CIMUN XXIII



Topic A: Promoting Peace in Central and South America

Key Vocabulary

Self-Determination: *The right of all peoples to freely choose their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development without external interference.*

Esquipulas II Peace Agreement: *The Esquipulas II Peace Agreement, officially titled the "Procedure for the Establishment of a Firm and Lasting Peace in Central America", was a historic accord signed on August 7, 1987, by the presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Authored primarily by Costa Rican President Óscar Arias Sánchez, the regional plan aimed to end severe Cold War-era civil conflicts through democratization, national reconciliation, a cessation of hostilities, and the termination of outside aid to irregular rebel forces.*

Contadora Group: *Contadora Group was a diplomatic initiative formed in January 1983 by the foreign ministers of Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela. Its goal was to promote peace, democracy, and regional security to resolve violent conflicts in Central America without foreign military intervention.*

Central American Crisis: *A term that refers to the collapse of entrenched right-wing dictatorships, the rise of widespread socioeconomic unrest, and the eruption of leftist revolutionary movements and civil wars across nations like Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala in the 1970's.*

Proxy War: *A proxy war is an indirect conflict where major powers avoid fighting each other face to face. Instead, affluent nations support smaller local organizations or governments with money, weapons, and militarized training to fight on behalf of such major powers.*

Contra Movement (Contras): *Contras (short for contrarrevolucionarios) were a collection of right-wing, anti-communist rebel groups. They fought a guerrilla war in Nicaragua against the leftist Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) government from 1981 to 1990. This conflict functioned as a prominent Cold War proxy war.*

Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN): *An insurgent group who later became a legitimate political party. On October 10, 1980, the FMLN was created as the paramilitary arm of the Democratic Revolutionary Front (Frente Democrático Revolucionario; FDR), a coalition of dissident political groups backed by Cuba. Throughout the 1980s its members initiated and engaged in hard-fought battles with Salvadoran government troops who were trained and supplied by the United States. In November 1989 the FMLN launched a major offensive on a number of urban centres in the country, including the country's capital, San Salvador.*

National Reconciliation: *National Reconciliation Process is a strategic initiative aimed at restoring peace and cooperation among conflicting factions within a nation following a period of conflict. This process involves dialogue, negotiation, and policy reforms to address grievances*



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and build trust. It is crucial for sustainable peace, enabling societies to transition from conflict to stability and development.

Counterinsurgency: *Organized military activity designed to combat insurgency.*

Topic Summary

Description of the Topic

At present, the Organization of American States (OAS) is confronting one of the great dilemmas in its short history: How to manage civil conflict on a broad scale throughout Latin America. With equal importance, the OAS is compelled to do so in a manner that respects democratic values and self-determination while reaffirming the traditional commitment to non-intervention and hemispheric stability. The Balkanization of much of Central America, where varied ideological aspirations spawned left-wing revolutionary movements and right-wing or military governments, has been a major source of conflict. These conflicts have caused the intervention of external powers, the wholesale displacement of citizens, the debilitation of neighboring countries, and the ruin of subregional economies. South America presents a similar but less severe set of confrontations. Much of the region has emerged from more than a decade of military rule, but democratic governments are fragile at best. Argentina is being forcibly returned to civilian rule, and Chile remains host to General Augusto Pinochet's military regime and to intense internal conflict. These cases in turn pose questions about civilian-military relations, democratic governments, and government authority that have direct implications for other members of the hemisphere. The OAS must therefore decide if and how member states will assist one another in reducing conflict, promoting peaceful political change, and preserving regional peace without undermining the concepts of self-determination and sovereignty.

Historical Background

The confrontations currently shaking the hemisphere did not arise exclusively from the Cold War confrontation. International competition undoubtedly sharpened many of them, but for the most part, the roots of these conflicts reach back over decades of political exclusion, land concentration, authoritarian rule, and limited social and economic opportunity. In much of Latin America, calls for reform are regularly answered with suppression rather than the bargaining table, so that by the 1970s, even moderate groups of the political opposition were convinced that armed struggle was the only recourse left to push for change.

Revolutionary movements increasingly drew inspiration from the Cuban Revolution of 1959 and other socialist governments, while anti-communist administrations throughout the hemisphere received substantial economic, military, and diplomatic support from the United States. Proxy wars and political disputes, consequently, became embedded with the broader strategy of the Cold War. Yet, reducing these conflicts to solely occurring due to the East v. West rivalry overlooks the structural inequalities and political instability that predated these



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superpowers involving themselves within the hemisphere, and continue to shape the trajectory of violence today. Intervention from powerful Cold War states has intensified existing conflicts within the region and has amplified the damage done.

Central America tells us a great deal about the relationship between local grievances and international competition. Civil wars in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala broke out in different political environments. Yet all three illustrated the military incapacity of the state to resolve politically based conflicts. Counterinsurgency efforts by each respective government prevented the insurgents from succeeding, though seldom addressed the conditions that led to the uprising. For their part, insurgents could sustain the conflict even if they lacked the capacity to win sufficient control of the state. As the decade ended, prolonged military stalemate remained a central characteristic of the region.

In El Salvador, decades of military influence over government, disputed elections, and socioeconomic inequality culminate in the outbreak of civil war in 1980. The killing of Archbishop Óscar Romero is seen as the main expression of the country's dire political situation, whereas the formation of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) unites with several guerrilla groups. In the 1980s, serious breaches of international humanitarian rights were blamed on both the Salvadoran government and the FMLN. Following the war, governments evidencing credibility seek to legitimize politics, yet the conflicts remain unresolved, without either side winning the war.

Guatemalan government actions against insurgents disproportionately affect the Indigenous Mayan community, particularly in the rural highlands where guerrillas have their supporters. The forced village destruction, displacement, and killings of local civilians cause one of the most prominent humanitarian tragedies in the area. The long-standing conflict has established that military force alone will never ensure the proper resolution of political disputes.

In Nicaragua, the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in 1979 initially appears to mark the conclusion of one period of political instability. Instead, it ushers in another. Opposition to the Sandinista government quickly aligns itself with the Contra movement, transforming Nicaragua into one of the principal arenas of Cold War competition. Nicaragua further proves, as predicted, that revolutionary movements are a result of the discontent of the people, but international rivalry over the people's problems tends to create more conflict than resolve the issues.

With the republic's transition to democracy in 1983, Argentina marks a significant turning point after enduring several years of a military dictatorship. However, the Carapintadas repeatedly turn against the government in military insurrections, showing that the transfer to democracy does not quickly erase the armed forces' political power. Hence, the Argentine case emphasizes the fact that the end of the totalitarian regime is just the initial move towards the democratic process.

In the case of Chile, the October 1988 plebiscite, which decided against continuing General Augusto Pinochet's presidency under the present constitutional law, does not prevent the



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military government from holding power during transition periods. Resistance groups, particularly the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front, persist in insurgent activities against the government, while extensive counterinsurgency operations attempt to mend damage done. Therefore, Chile becomes a point where political liberalization, on the one hand, and negligence of peace, on the other, can survive together. Hence, the line gets blurred on the issues of legitimate rule, safety, and transitions to democracy.

Despite the fact that these conflicts arise within the individual states, their effects expand beyond the national borders. Honduras illustrates this aspect more than any other state in the region. Honduras has become the ideal escape route for refugees from countries in unrest, but it has also been a staging point for the Contra insurgency and its forces launching attacks from Honduras on Nicaragua. As a result, the distinction between humanitarian responsibility and regional security becomes increasingly unknowable.

Costa Rica, in spite of its long-standing neutrality and no armed forces, similarly, faces the problem of shielding itself from neighboring conflicts, while the instability of Central America affects Panama's geographical position and control of the Panama Canal. Instead of continuing along the military path that has led to open-ended wars, Central American governments increasingly recognize that peace is achieved effectively through regional diplomacy. The Esquipulas II Accord, a treaty crafting the most significant regional conflict resolution framework to a date, was signed by the presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua in August 1987. The move is notable not only for the trust placed in ceasefires, national reconciliation, democratization, negotiations with armed opposition groups, respect for human rights and regional verification mechanisms but in the message it sends for the future that political compromise, rather than military victory alone, lays durable peace's foundation.

Current Situation

As of January 1989, none of the principal conflicts confronting the region have reached a comprehensive settlement. Agricultural production has dropped, infrastructure has been disabled, national economies have been debilitated by continued violence. The Esquipulas Process created a structure appraising truces, democratization, dialogue, and national reconciliation. The United Nations, the Contadora Group, and the OAS have echoed to different degrees their approval for negotiated settlements, indicative of a broader acceptance of the view that political arrangements may last longer than military confrontation. Yet prolonged civil wars and similar crises increasingly challenge a strict interpretation of non-intervention. The committee must determine what lengths are necessary to maintain regional stability while honoring the organization's legal mandate.

Potential Solutions



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Ultimately, the effectiveness of the Organization of American States (OAS) will depend on its ability to balance two core principles. 1. Respecting the sovereignty of its member states and 2. Promoting stability across both Central and South America. As of now, the Americas' conflicts suggest that the conditions for peace will have to include not just ceasing military hostilities, but also protracted cooperation, stronger democratic structures, and a solid commitment to the security and defense of civilian populations. The OAS is particularly equipped, by its political character, to address the political, humanitarian, and security problems generated by these internal armed confrontations. Additionally, its Charter underscores the ideal of peace and the promotion of democracy, cooperation, and security among its member states. The question the Inter-American system faces, then, is not whether or not to act, but how to act, faced with these situations that compete for its responsibility.

If the committee chooses a diplomatic route, the OAS can provide a neutral space for dialogue between governments and armed opposition groups and help support the implementation of peace agreements. While the OAS helped to create an environment conducive to negotiation and maintain international support for the peace processes, these efforts may not be possible without assistance from other UN agencies or the international community. Consequently, the committee may choose to seek resources that can be used for confidence-building measures, humanitarian assistance, or other efforts in support of negotiations. This would require additional assistance from other United Nations (UN) agencies, nongovernmental organizations, or the committee could choose to utilize the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). Both government security forces and insurgent groups have faced accusations of extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, torture, and attacks against civilians. In utilizing IACHR, OAS can investigate and document abuses, encourage governments to uphold regional human rights standards, and provide recommendations that promote greater accountability for human rights abuses.

When acting upon current concerns, the Organization of American states must recognize more than just the cross-continent big-picture issues - and acknowledge the regional nature of the crisis. Refugee intake, military activity, illicit arms trafficking, foreign involvement, and commercial transport have shown that instability in one country can affect neighboring states. Greater cooperation in border security, information sharing, humanitarian planning, and diplomatic coordination can reduce the spread of conflict while respecting the sovereignty of member states. Knowing the key organizations, agreements, and concepts shaping the political landscape of the Americas in 1989 will be extremely important for your debate in committee.

Sources for Further Research

Organization of American States. AG/RES. 937 (XVIII-O/88): Report on the Procedure for Establishing Firm and Lasting Peace in Central America. Washington, DC: Organization of American States, 1988. <https://www.oas.org/en/sla/docs/ag03802E01.pdf>



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This primary source outlines the OAS's support for implementing the Esquipulas II Peace Agreement and promoting regional cooperation in Central America. Outlines the priorities of OAS during this time period.

International Legal Materials. The Contadora Process for Peace in Central America. Vol. 23, no. 4. Washington, DC: American Society of International Law, 1984.

https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/2B6B5040E4FE7811FF86A275F7688260/S0020782900030734a.pdf/contadora_process_for_peace_in_central_america.pdf

This collection contains the diplomatic agreements negotiated through the Contadora Group, one of the earliest regional efforts to end Central America's conflicts. The collection provides information on how Central and South America went about peace agreements prior to 1989.

United Nations. ONUCA: Background. United Nations Peacekeeping, n.d. Accessed August 1, 2026. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/past/onucabackgr.html>

Although ONUCA was formally established later in 1989, this background page explains the Esquipulas II Agreement, the regional peace process, and the international mechanisms created to verify compliance. It is particularly useful for understanding the long-term significance of the negotiations already underway in January 1989.

Organization of American States. Peace Fund Virtual Library. Organization of American States. Accessed August 1, 2026.

<https://www.oas.org/sap/peacefund/VirtualLibrary/virtualLibrary/virtualLibrary.html>

The OAS Peace Fund Virtual Library contains documents, agreements, and historical materials related to conflict resolution throughout the Americas. It is an excellent resource for primary documents on the Esquipulas Peace Process and the OAS's broader role in regional diplomacy.

Rossignol, Michel. Central America: The Peace Process. Ottawa: Library of Parliament, 1989. <https://books.google.com/books?id=fQEjAQAAIAAJ>

This report analyzes the origins of the Central American peace process, the Arias Peace Plan, and the diplomatic challenges facing the region in 1989. This source may help in understanding how policymakers viewed such conflicts before many later historical developments.

Questions to Consider

1. In the event that internal conflict begins to threaten regional peace, how should the OAS balance the principle of national sovereignty with the need for collective action?



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2. When considering human rights abuses, can peace truly be sustainable without accountability? And should ending violence take priority in the short term?
3. How should the OAS approach negotiations with armed opposition groups, while still recognizing the legitimacy of the governments of member states?
4. To what extent should outside powers influence efforts to resolve conflicts in Central and South America? And what role should the OAS play in limiting foreign involvement?
5. Which policies should the OAS prioritize to promote long-lasting peace? In your response, make sure to consider the following options:
 - a. Humanitarian aid
 - b. Democratic reforms
 - c. Economic support and Development
 - d. Diplomatic Efforts
 - e. A mixture of all of the above



Topic B: Financial Stability in the Western Hemisphere

Key Vocabulary

External Debt: Money that a government owes to a lender in a different country, such as Latin American nations owing money to foreign banks.

Debt Service: The money that a nation must pay on its debt, including interest.

Default: Failing to pay on one's debt. While it may relieve one of the debt, it can hurt credit and reputation.

Commercial Bank: A private bank that makes loans, including some loans to Latin American nations.

International Monetary Fund (IMF): An international organization that lends money to nations facing financial emergencies.

Austerity: A set of economic policies implemented by governments to reduce budget deficits and control public debt, typically through a combination of spending cuts and tax increases

Restructuring: A negotiated change to the terms of a loan, such as giving a country more time to repay or lowering interest costs

Baker Plan: A 1985 U.S. proposal which called for economic reforms in heavily indebted countries in exchange for new loans from commercial banks and development institutions.

Topic Summary

By January 1989, many countries in Latin are facing difficulty with repaying money borrowed from foreign banks and governments. All in, the region owes roughly \$400 billion.³ Most of the debt must be repaid in United States dollars, and many of the loans have interest rates that change alongside international markets. Governments therefore face a difficult decision. They can send more money abroad to cover their debt payments, but doing so would leave less money for food imports, roads, schools, hospitals, and other important aspects of economic development. On the other hand, refusing to pay (defaulting on their debt) would damage foreign banks and make it far harder for the Latin American nations to borrow money again in the future. The OAS must consider how to protect the financial system and manage their debt while also allowing countries to recover and grow economically.

The origins of this crisis go back to the 1970s. After the vast oil price increases of 1973 and 1979, oil-exporting countries received large amounts of money and deposited much of it in banks in the United States and Europe for safe keeping.⁴ As a result, these banks then lent the excess money to developing countries. Latin American governments borrowed this capital to build public projects such as roads, hospitals, and other infrastructure. Additionally, some also borrowed to cover rising government deficits or support their state-owned companies. At the

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<https://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/051215/how-can-countrys-debt-crisis-affect-economies-around-world.asp#toc-the-beginnings-and-impact-of-the-latin-american-debt-crisis>

⁴ <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/latin-american-debt-crisis>



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time, borrowing appeared to be an affordable option because interest rates were fairly low, and many countries expected their exports to keep growing. Led by these beliefs, Latin America's foreign debt rose rapidly, from about \$29 billion in 1970 to more than \$300 billion by 1982.

This era of cheap borrowing and investment did not last long, and the situation quickly changed at the beginning of the 1980s. Due to many factors including oil price shocks and high government spending, The United States experienced high inflation and thus raised interest rates in an effort to control it.⁵ Because many Latin American loans had variable interest rates (meaning the interests rate of the loan can change even after taking it out), the cost of paying those loans rose as well. The United States dollar also became stronger, meaning it took more foreign currency to pay the already increasing debt, making it harder for countries to earn enough dollars to repay their debts. In conjunction with this, a global recession reduced demand for Latin American raw material exports such as coffee, sugar, and oil. Some Latin American governments also faced problems domestically, including high government spending, poorly run state-owned companies, inefficient tax systems, and money continuing to leave the country. In August 1982, Mexico announced that it could not make the scheduled payments on its debt. This showed the world that the problem was not limited to one country, and began a spiral into a wider regional crisis.

The initial response focused on preventing immediate defaults of countries, essentially avoiding more situations like Mexico. The International Monetary Fund, the United States government, foreign central banks, and commercial banks created emergency loan packages, which provided more favorable funding to nations in crisis so they could cover some of their obligations.

Banks agreed to reschedule some payments, meaning that countries in debt were given more time to repay. In several cases, banks also provided "new money" so countries could keep making interest payments. The IMF assistance was not entirely free however. In return for this help, governments often faced requirements to reduce budget deficits, devalue their currencies, and find ways to increase exports. This system of policy is called austerity. While this system did help prevent an immediate collapse of the global banking system, it did not remove the debt from these nations.

While helpful in the short-term, the cost of these programs has been high. Throughout the 80s, these countries (and others worldwide) experiences slow or even negative economic growth, high unemployment, low wages, and inflation. Governments who previously were widely investing in public projects stopped and even issued cuts for services such as education and healthcare.

While sending much of their money abroad for debt repayments, the past decade has brought decreased living standards across much of Latin America. Politically, the crisis has put pressure on new democracies in places like Argentina and Brazil who must deal with unsatisfied citizens

⁵ <https://www.fdic.gov/history/1980-1989>



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facing these tough new economic reforms. People also disagree on who to blame for this crisis. Nations in debt argue that foreign banks pushed risky loans onto them and the economic situation in the United States impacted them directly even though it was outside of their control. They also argue that the tight controls over their markets have made debt repayments difficult, and the demands of foreign banks unreasonable. In contrast, lending banks and foreign governments argue that the decision to borrow so much capital lies in the hands of Latin America, and economic reforms are necessary to long-term stability. They also argue that debt cancellation would damage banks in their nations and reward poor economic choices, which would create long-term instability and weaken future lending. Any OAS agreement must have to address this conflict of thought brought by these two sides.

In 1985, United States Treasury Secretary James Baker introduced the “Program for Sustained Growth”, better known as the Baker Plan.⁶ The plan called for major debtor countries to adopt market-based reforms to improve their economics. Reforms included reducing government spending, opening economies to trade/investment, and state-owned industries.⁷ In exchange for committing to such reforms, commercial banks would provide about \$20 billion in new loans, while the World Bank and other institutions would provide additional financing to Latin American nations. The Baker Plan is built on the idea that most countries simply could not repay their debts without economic growth. However, this plan has had limited success. Many commercial banks have been unwilling to make the large loans which are required, and several countries continue to pay more in interest on their than they receive in new financing, continuing their spiral into debt.

While the Baker Plan attempted a blanket solution⁸, across Latin America the approach to solving this crisis has not been the same. Mexico has negotiated several agreements with its banks and has tested the idea of replacing old loans with new bonds. Brazil stopped paying interest to commercial banks for part of 1987, using a temporary pause to pressure lenders into negotiations, but ultimately reaching a new agreement in 1988.⁹ Argentina continues to face high inflation and repeated trouble meeting IMF economic targets. Chile has used “debt-equity swaps”, which allow investors to exchange some of Chile’s debt for ownership in Chilean businesses. While these can reduce debt and increase investment, they also bring rise to inflation and hand over control of domestic companies to foreign investors. For smaller nations across Latin America, their smaller debts are offset by having less exports and fewer government resources.

⁶ https://fraser.stlouisfed.org/files/docs/historical/frbsf/frbsf_let/frbsf_let_19851122.pdf

⁷ <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/history/2001/ch10.pdf>

⁸ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/512631468764360794/pdf/multi0page.pdf>

⁹

<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/426141468913855342/pdf/Brazil-External-debt-development-and-prospects.pdf>



The OAS faces some limitation as a governing body¹⁰. They are unable to cancel loans or demand other orders from private banks. Additionally, it cannot replace the function of international finance institutions such as the IMF or World Bank. Despite these limitations, the OAS can provide a ground for negotiation, collect/publish information, and foster cooperation.

Delegates may consider a few possible policies when approaching this topic. One option is debt rescheduling, which gives countries more time to pay and may lower interest costs. Rescheduling is less threatening to banks, but it may delay the inevitable problem of default and should ideally be paired with some reform. A second option is debt reduction through exchanges for new bonds, as some countries have been experimenting with. This directly lowers the amount owed, but banks would have to accept some losses and would likely demand accommodations. A third option is additional lending for projects that increase exports and economic growth. New loans may help countries recover economically, but they would also make the debt larger if the projects fail. Debt-equity swaps and debt-for-development programs could also prove to be useful¹¹, but they need oversight to prevent corruption, foreign influence, and inflation. Beyond these, there are many other creative and innovative financial solutions delegates should explore.

Sources for Further Research

Robert Grier, External Factors of the Debt Crisis,

<https://mru.org/courses/mexicos-economy-current-prospects-and-history/external-factors-debt-crisis>

This explores the external factors influencing the debt crisis in Mexico. Many of these principles can be applied to other nations.

Jérôme Sgard, 1982: the debt crisis that could have destroyed Western banking, 2025,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-59lrnGW1o>

This explores the debt crisis through the angle of banking. Since OAS deals with these banks, it is important to consider their perspective.

Shearman Sterling, Making History: The Latin American Debt Crisis, 2014,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDzg48OIlmM>

A solid documentary providing an overview of the debt crisis, and how this specific firm played a role in the crisis.

Fidel Castro, Fidel Castro: The debt is unpayable, 1985,

<https://www.cadtm.org/Fidel-Castro-The-debt-is-unpayable>

Fidel Castro giving a speech on the debt situation. He lists many of the grievances of Latin American/Caribbean nations regarding the situation and proposes his ideal solution.

¹⁰ https://www.oas.org/en/sla/dil/inter_american_treaties_A-41_charter_OAS.asp

¹¹ <https://www.imf.org/external/np/mae/pdebt/2000/eng/index.htm>



Questions to Consider

1. Should banks and governments reduce the amount that is owed, or simply provide more time to pay the loans?
2. How do you balance long-term economic growth with short-term responsibility to pay debt?
3. How can debt agreements protect crucial services such as healthcare and education while still encouraging economic reform?
4. Should Latin American countries approach this problem with a single solution or create a framework for individualized solutions for each country?
5. What limits should be placed on foreign banks and nations controlling sovereign policy through demanding terms of austerity?



THE STATE OF THE WORLD

Sunday January 22nd, 1989

Overview - The World on January 22nd, 1989

It is January 22nd, 1989. Through times of both heightened tension and detente, the global Cold War has been ongoing for forty years, and has cemented into a relatively stable geopolitical order. Through diplomacy and proxy conflicts, the United States and Soviet Union have continued to promote their ideological convictions, while each has remained, largely, dedicated to maintaining the international order of the United Nations System. However, the world is not defined just by superpowers posturing and maneuvering on the world stage.

In Britain, Margaret Thatcher continues to promote neoliberalism, free markets, and private enterprise. In Iran, the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq War is at the fore as the Islamic Republic finally sees its first period of peace since the revolution. Germany, East and West, still grapple with how to survive as a country on the front lines of the Cold War, and one which remains divided. The Solidarity trade union in Poland has driven such fervor that the government has agreed to sit down and negotiate. Students protest in China, even as it continues to open up to the rest of the world.

Perhaps most importantly of all, today is Superbowl Sunday, with the Bengals and the 49ers facing off in Miami.

At CIMUN XXIII, you will encounter a world beset by growing instability and uncertainty. The bedrock of the international order is beginning to shift, and actors on both the national and international scale must decide how to react. Some welcome change, others fear what it will mean. As you enter the world of 1989, you should try to put yourself in the shoes of someone who lived through these shifts. Without hindsight, what would world leaders have thought as events unfolded?

Below, you will find more detailed information about the various cabinets and committees which will be present at this year's conference, as well as the general state of the world and major issues confronting it. While some of these issues may seem remote to your particular position, it is important to remember that at CIMUN, everything is interconnected, and you never know how issues will present themselves across the conference.

The Players

This year's 1989 simulation narrowly beats out our 1956 simulation to be the largest simulation CIMUN has ever put on. To help you keep track of things, this section will detail the cabinets and committees which will be represented at CIMUN XXIII. Regardless of which cabinet or committee you are personally participating in, knowing these other players is



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important, as they represent bodies that might interact with you or your committee directly or indirectly throughout our integrated simulation.

Committees

United Nations General Assembly

The United Nations General Assembly is the plenary body of the United Nations. With representatives from every UN member state, the General Assembly is the most universal global forum, and it is tasked with addressing major global issues of all descriptions. This year, the General Assembly will be discussing *The Emerging Phenomenon of Global Warming*, and *The Role of the United Nations in Regions Recovering From Conflicts*. Though UNGA resolutions are not legally binding and the UNGA cannot independently enforce them, they carry significant weight and often represent a broad consensus of the international community.

United Nations Security Council

The United Nations Security Council is tasked with maintaining international peace and security. Unlike the General Assembly, the UNSC has the authority and responsibility to take concrete action to respond to global security concerns. In 1989, the Security Council will be discussing *The Aftermath of the Iran-Iraq War*, *The Namibian War of Independence*, and *The Situation in the Occupied Arab Territories*. In addition, the UNSC will be the UN body responsible for addressing any emergent threats to global peace or security.

International Atomic Energy Association

The International Atomic Energy Association is a global organization which seeks to promote the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, while maintaining safety and impeding the use of atomic energy for military purposes. In 1989, the IAEA will discuss *Safety Standards in a post-Chernobyl Era*, and *Monitoring Nuclear Proliferation Globally*.

Organization of American States

The Organization of American States is a regional body composed of almost every country in the Western Hemisphere. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the organization's stated purpose is to promote peace, democracy, and human rights in the hemisphere. In 1989, the OAS will discuss *Promoting Peace in Central and South America*, and *Financial Stability in the Western Hemisphere*.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was founded just under forty years ago in April, 1949. Since then, it has served as a multilateral alliance aimed at assuring collective defense for



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its member states. In 1989, NATO will discuss *Responding to the Faltering Soviet Bloc*, *Modernization of Short Range Nuclear Missiles*, and *Rising Tensions in Yugoslavia*.

Warsaw Pact Organization Summit

The Warsaw Pact Organization was founded in 1955 as a political and military treaty between members of the Eastern Bloc. Since then, it has aimed to collective defense for its member states. At this summit, the Warsaw Pact member states will be joined by several countries which are not members of the Warsaw Pact, but which have political or strategic reasons to consider cooperation with the organization. In 1989, the Warsaw Pact Organization Summit will discuss *Consideration of Strategic Coordination with Members and Aligned Countries*, *Concerted Action in Response to Political Crises*, and *Rising Tensions in Yugoslavia*.

Senate of the United States of America

The Senate of the United States of America is the upper chamber of the United States' bicameral legislature. Its functions include passing legislation, confirming political appointments, and ratifying treaties. The Senate also exercises several oversight functions. In 1989, the U.S. Senate will discuss *The Flag Protection Act of 1989*, and *Maintaining Our System of Checks and Balances in the Wake of the Iran-Contra Affair*.

Guardian Council of the Constitution of Iran

The Guardian Council of the Constitution is a body which exercises legal and clerical oversight within the Iranian legal system. The Guardian Council ensures that legislation aligns with the requirements of Islamic law, and the country's written constitution. This sitting of the Guardian Council will include several non-members who have been invited by Ayatollah Khomeini to participate in discussion of reforms to Iran's constitution, which the Guardian Council will work with the Council of Ministers to complete. In 1989, the Guardian Council will discuss *Reforming the Constitution of the Islamic Republic*, *Promoting Islamic Morality at Home and Abroad*, and *Continuing Reconstruction After the Iran-Iraq War*.

International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice serves as the highest judicial body within the United Nations System, and the primary forum for resolving international legal disputes. In addition to its pre-set docket, the ICJ will be responsible for considering and potentially ruling on any international disputes which countries bring before it. In 1989, the ICJ's docket includes *Aerial Incident of 3 July 1988 (Iran v. United States)*, *Certain Phosphate Lands in Nauru (Nauru v. Australia)*, and *(Applicability of Article VI, Section 22, of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (United Nations v. Romania))*.



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Cabinets

Cabinet of the United States of America

Since the end of the Second World War, the United States of America has been the indisputable leader of the Western Bloc, and arguably the most powerful nation in the world. Alongside the Soviet Union, it shepherded in the rules-based international order that has governed geopolitical affairs for the last forty years. At the same time, it has been in a deep and ongoing ideological conflict against the Soviet Union, aiming to promote capitalism globally in opposition to Soviet Communism. In 1989, with newly elected President Bush sworn in just two days ago, the Cabinet of the United States will discuss *The Impending Collapse of the Soviet Empire*, *Addressing the International Flow of Narcotics*, and *Texas v. Johnson and the Issue of Anti-American Sentiment*.

Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

In 1945, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics emerged from the Great Patriotic War having suffered catastrophically, but triumphant. Since then, the Soviet Union has worked to maintain the bloc of communist states in Eastern Europe, and to assist communist movements in various parts of the world to overthrow imperialist governments. However, the Cold War has not been easy, and both the Soviet Union and the broader Eastern Bloc now face severe internal and external crises. Mikhail Gorbachev, however, believes that reform is possible, and that it will lead to the revitalization of the Soviet project. In 1989, the Cabinet of the Soviet Union will discuss *Bolstering the International Position of the Soviet Union*, *Delivering on the Promises of Glasnost and Perestroika*, and *Completing the Withdrawal of the Red Army from Afghanistan*.

Council of Ministers of the German Democratic Republic

This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the German Democratic Republic's founding. Though the country certainly faces many issues, it is often regarded as one of the most successful in the Eastern Bloc. As the country on the front line of the Iron Curtain, and a country which remains divided from the other half of Germany, Erich Honecker and his government must always keep international affairs in mind. In 1989, the Council of the GDR will discuss *Maintaining the Party's Control Over East German Politics*, and *The Relationship Between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany*.

Council of Ministers of the Polish People's Republic

In 1939, the Second Polish Republic was wiped from world maps as the first outbreak of the Second World War in Europe. But Poland is not yet lost. Despite drastic territorial changes following the Second World War, the Polish People's Republic returned to world maps, and it remains. Within the Eastern Bloc, Poland's international affairs have been limited, and its internal politics have frayed significantly in the past decade. Between 1981 and 1983, a military



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junta governed the country, and the Solidarity trade union has arisen as a very popular outlet for political discontent. Now, Wojciech Jaruzelski and his government must navigate the various internal crises which threaten the Polish People's Republic. In 1989, the Council of Ministers of Poland will discuss *International Support for Internal Dissent and Poland's Place in the Eastern Bloc*, and *The Government's Stance Towards the Solidarity Trade Union*.

National Security Council of the Federal Republic of Germany

This year marks forty years since the Federal Republic of Germany was founded and the Allied occupation of Germany ended. Since then, West Germany has become an example of the Western Bloc's successes, with reconstruction producing a thriving economy and high standard of living. Nevertheless, as a "front line country," the FRG remains one of the countries most likely to suffer ruin if the Cold War were to become a third world war. Chernobyl has also increased the pressure of anti-nuclear activists within Germany on Helmut Kohl's government. In 1989, the National Security Council of the FRG will discuss *The Relationship Between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic*, and *Environmental Policy and the Public Outcry Surrounding Nuclear Energy*.

Cabinet of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland may not be the world's preeminent power anymore, but it is still one of the most important countries in the Western Bloc. For the last eight years, the rapport between Margaret Thatcher and now former President Ronald Reagan put the so-called special relationship at the forefront of people's minds. Now, Britain is at a crossroads. Several years have passed since the United Kingdom agreed to return Hong Kong to China, and the Thatcher government must navigate how the United Kingdom will handle its relationships to countries that are not liberal democracies. In 1989, the Cabinet of the United Kingdom will discuss *Britain's Stance Towards China*, and *The Satanic Verses Controversy*.

State Council of the People's Republic of China

The People's Republic of China has undergone an unimaginable transformation. In 1945, China emerged from the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression into a continuation of the Chinese Civil War. In 1949, Mao Zedong proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China in Tiananmen Square. Over the past forty years, China has gone from being broken by war and a largely rural economy, to industrialization, and in the last decade, explosive growth as it has opened up to the broader world. Now, Deng Xiaoping's government faces growing discontent amongst students in major cities, and a question of how to position China on the global stage. In 1989, the State Council of the PRC will discuss *Student Unrest in the People's Republic*, and *The People's Republic of China's Place in Global Superpower Competition*.



Council of Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Ten years ago, the Western-backed Shah of Iran was overthrown in the Islamic Revolution. Less than a year later, Iraq attacked the fledgling Islamic Republic of Iran, a war which only ended in the latter half of last year. Now, Ayatollah Khomeini's health is ailing, and he has called for reforms to be made to the constitution of the Islamic Republic. The Council of Ministers will meet with the Guardian Council of the Constitution to discuss constitutional issues, but Prime Minister Mousavi's government will also be faced with considering Iran's place in global affairs in the wake of the Iran-Iraq War. In 1989, the Council of Ministers of Iran will discuss *Navigating Between Regional Stability and Revolution Principles*, and *Reforming the Constitution of the Islamic Republic*.

First and Second Ad-Hoc Committees of the Secretary General

The First and Second Ad-Hoc Committees of the Secretary General will be announced to participants at CIMUN XXIII's opening ceremony.

CIMUN Chronicle

Press delegates writing for the CIMUN Chronicle will be tasked with investigating the ongoing events of the conference, chasing down leads, and writing stories which will be published to inform the rest of the conference of major events as they are happening. What you do or do not tell a member of the press, how you present information to them, and the relationships you build or refuse to build with them all contribute to the way that your country will be presented. It is the job of the press to seek the truth, and for non-press delegates, it is your choice to decide how forthcoming you are willing to be.

Major Issues

The Cold War

There is no one recognized starting date to the Cold War. Though historians agree that it did not start immediately at the end of the Second World War, there is disagreement on when the wartime alliance transitioned into a state of competition. Some say that the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe after the war was the beginning, others point to Winston Churchill's *Iron Curtain* speech in 1946, and yet others point to the Truman Doctrine's inauguration in 1947. Whenever it started, by 1989, the Cold War had entered its fifth decade.

The Cold War developed through distinct phases throughout the second half of the 20th century. From its beginning to 1962, the Cold War went through a period of escalation. This period saw the beginning of the Space Race, the formation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, the construction of the Berlin Wall, and the Cuban Missile Crisis. It also saw the beginning of proxy



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conflicts, wars fought within individual countries where different sides were backed by each superpower. Such conflicts remain an enduring feature of the Cold War even in 1989.

By 1969, the Cold War entered a period known as “Detente,” with both Washington and Moscow reaching out to ease tensions. This period saw the end of the Vietnam War, President Richard Nixon’s visit to China, and the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks signed. Though there was certainly still conflict and tension, including continued proxy wars, coups, and revolutions, the superpowers consciously pursued policy aimed at reducing the possibility of global war.

Detente ended in 1979, with the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan. The Soviet-Afghan war has continued ever since, and even now the Soviet Union has not yet completed the withdrawal of its military forces from Afghanistan. Ronald Reagan’s presidency, from 1981 to January 1989, also contributed to increased military spending and diplomatic tensions. Sometimes called the “Second Cold War,” these elevated tensions sharply heightened the conflict between the two superpowers.

Since 1985, the Cold War has been in a renewed period of easing tensions. Mikhail Gorbachev’s introduction of Glasnost and Perestroika in 1985 has contributed to the sense that the superpowers are no longer preparing for war, and the recent election of President George H.W. Bush in the United States presents an opportunity for the superpowers to reset their relationships. Nevertheless, the Cold War remains the preeminent feature of the geopolitical landscape.

It is also important to remember that the Cold War is not just a conflict between the two superpowers. Both the United States and the Soviet Union lead their geopolitical bloc, but those blocs are not monolithic. In the west, even a close ally such as the United Kingdom has issues on which it differs from the United States, and frontline nations such as West Germany confront the reality that if the Cold War went “hot,” they would be much more certain to face destruction than the United States itself. The Eastern Bloc is more tightly aligned with the Soviet Union, but the Solidarity movement in Poland and other unrest within the Eastern Bloc represent challenges to that authority.

Though the Non-Aligned Movement never coalesced into a third pole in the global Cold War, there are still many countries that don’t fit neatly into either bloc. The People’s Republic of China is the most clear example, having broken with the Soviet Union several decades ago, and now opening its economy up to the west while maintaining the Communist Party of China’s control. Iran, on the other hand, overthrew a western-backed government in 1979, but maintains a state ideology which is opposed to Soviet communism, leaving it in neither superpower’s camp. Proxy conflicts also continue to be a major issue in Central America and South Africa, where the United Nations may step in to aid in ongoing peace processes.

In 1987, the United States and the Soviet Union signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. This was the first, and so far only, arms reduction treaty between the superpowers, and may represent a move towards a real end to the Cold War. Whether the superpowers will ever reach a state of what Nikita Khrushchev called “peaceful coexistence” is yet to be seen. In



the meantime, lingering tensions and proxy conflicts continue to demonstrate that the Cold War is a live conflict.

The Global Narcotics Trade

Beginning in the late 1970s, the “cocaine boom” was a period in which the price of cocaine increased drastically, leading to increased cocaine production by organized cartel groups in Central and South America, and increased transnational trade of the substance. The development of these sophisticated transnational narcotics trafficking networks has globalized an issue that was previously domestic.

The global response to this development has been mixed. In the United States, the so-called “War on Drugs” began in the 1970s with an emphasis on treatment, but has evolved to include mandatory minimum sentences for the sale and possession of illegal substances. One of the challenges to resolving this issue, however, is that it requires cooperation between states with varying legal regimes, and with varying levels of state capacity to combat organized criminal enterprise. Particularly in Central and South America, where ongoing conflicts and political instability reduce the ability of governments to combat organized crime, the ability of governments to effectively combat cartels is limited, presenting challenges to international efforts to curb the drug production that takes place in those countries.

The Emergence of Environmental Politics

Over the last two decades, there has been a growing awareness amongst scientists and the global public about the impact that human beings have had on the natural environment. Though there have been some political efforts around environmental policy for over a century, early environmental efforts against smog and heavy pollution in cities were typically framed around human health and happiness. On the other hand, efforts to preserve certain land as national parks or preserves were also largely framed around human concerns. These efforts date back to the middle of the 19th century, but are of a different character than the environmental concerns that have developed over the last several decades.

The more recent development has been a concern for not just human health, but the natural environment itself, and particularly the natural environment on a global scale. Beginning in the 1960s, activists in the United States began to draw attention to the impact that farming practices, such as the widespread use of pesticides such as DDT, were having on natural populations. The early 1960s saw the low point in the population of the American Bald Eagle, which became a symbolic representation of how human activity was hurting the natural world. 1970 saw the celebration of the first Earth Day, and the United States became the first country with a widespread environmental movement seeking political change.

Though the environmentalist movement began in the United States, it has since taken on global prominence as scientists have developed a better understanding of the ways that human



activity is affecting the global environment. Over the past decade, scientists identified that the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) was creating an expanding hole in Earth's protective ozone layer around Antarctica. This led to the 1987 Montreal Protocol, the first example of global international cooperation on an environmental issue.

Other issues, such as acid rain, high profile incidents of oil spills and industrial accidents, and deforestation of rainforests are also examples of global concerns that are animating current environmental activism. Since the 1950s, various groups have opposed the use of nuclear energy as an extension of concerns surrounding the spread of nuclear weapons. In 1986, the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant which spread radiation over much of Europe and required the evacuation of more than three hundred thousand people from the surrounding regions, galvanized anti-nuclear activism, and activism against nuclear power remains a major concern for political environmentalists.

One of the most impactful emerging environmental problems is "climate change," which has taken on the moniker "global warming" after a highly publicized report to the United States senate last year. Scientists have identified that human use of fossil fuels, particularly coal, oil, and natural gas, is releasing concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere which have the potential to change weather patterns and temperatures on a global scale. However, the international community remains divided on how to address this problem.

The 1987 United Nations report "Our Common Future" called for sustainable development, meaning meeting the current needs of the human population without harming future generations. However, this focus on changing developmental policy highlights the divisions which make a unified international response difficult. While developed economies may be able to move away from reliance on fossil fuels, many nations with developing economies point out that "sustainable development" would mean severe delays and restrictions on their efforts to improve the standard of living of their citizens, and to develop their economies. Though there are some pressures on the international community to find a solution to the problem of global CO₂ emissions, a solution which countries with developed economies and those with developing economies will accept is a difficult proposition.

The Intifada¹²

Beginning in 1987 and still ongoing, the Intifada is a series of protests and clashes between Palestinians living in the occupied territories, and the government of Israel. The conflict began in December of 1987 when an Israeli military truck collided with cars at the Jabalia refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, killing four Palestinians. The resulting protests quickly spread throughout Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem.

¹² After the Second Intifada from 2000-2005, the 1987-1993 event (also known as the "Uprising of the Stones") came to be known as the First Intifada. Because this background guide is written in accordance with the world as it existed in 1989, the "first" is omitted.



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Since then, protests and clashes have continued throughout the occupied territories. Israel has responded with the use of military and police force, enforcing curfews and closing schools and universities in the West Bank. Hundreds of Palestinians and dozens of Israelis have died. Palestinian leadership has advocated for Palestinians to avoid violence, particularly lethal violence, but no single authority has effective control over Palestinians in the occupied territories. Outside the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU) has gained credibility, and many Palestinians comply with its communiqués. However, militant groups, most notably Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), have gained some sway in the occupied territories, rejecting the leadership of the PLO and UNLU, and advocating for the destruction of Israel. In early 1988, Israel arrested many of PIJ's leadership, and the group has faded into the background since then.

Protests continue now, with the rocks thrown by protesters earning the uprising the epithet "The Uprising of The Stones." Though no unified set of demands on the side of the protesters exists, the most widespread set of goals calls for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, and the withdrawal of Israel from all territory it occupied during the 1967 Six Days' War. This so-called "Two State Solution" contrasts with resolutions to the conflict which would see a single state in which Israelis and Palestinians both live.

The international community's response to the crisis has been divided. The west, led by the United States, has criticized tactics employed by Israel. The Soviet Union and the east have generally been sympathetic to Palestine, and have advocated for moderation, negotiations, and a two state solution. This period of escalated conflict has also led to political leaders in the Arab world reconsidering their approach to the Israel Palestine conflict.

Global Conflict Zones

Though some say that the Cold War is drawing to a close and the world may be moving towards an era of global peace, there are still numerous regions in the world which are in the midst of conflict, where tensions remain high, or which are recovering from conflicts which recently ended. The international community continues to debate how best to deal with the humanitarian impacts of war and conflict, and the political dimension of these conflicts often complicates things further as countries take sides in regional conflicts based on broader geopolitical concerns.

In the Middle East, the Intifada continues to highlight tensions that exist not just between Israel and Palestinians, but more broadly between Israel and neighboring Arab states. There have been several wars fought between the two sides, and though steps have been taken to normalize relations in the region and build towards peace, the ongoing flashpoint reinforces that those tensions have not been erased. Additionally, the ceasefire which brought fighting to an end in the nearly decade long Iran-Iraq War remains in place, but the United Nation's efforts to end the conflict are largely untested, and the international community as a whole continues to debate



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how best to prevent another conflict between Iran and Iraq, as well as how to assist in rebuilding following nearly a decade of war between the neighboring countries.

The Soviet Union is expected to complete its withdrawal from Afghanistan within the next few months. After a decade of fighting, most analysts agree that the Soviet people and the armed forces themselves had no more will to fight in a war that had become not just a quagmire, but an opportunity for the Soviet Union's geopolitical opponents to give it its own "Vietnam." The Soviet-backed communist government in Kabul remains in power, but it is fragile, and many doubt its ability to withstand the Afghan Mujahideen without continued Soviet support. The conflict stands as a further example of how asymmetric warfare has made conventional military invasion and occupation increasingly costly and difficult to sustain.

In Central and South America, several conflicts continue between the governments of individual countries, and militant groups therein. In both El Salvador and Nicaragua, armed conflicts continue between the sitting governments and opposition forces. Both of these conflicts have significant Cold War dimensions, but neither has been brought to an end even as the superpowers have sought a degree of peace. Further South, the Maoist Shining Path guerilla movement continues its insurgency in Peru. More broadly, the region has several dictatorships which face opposition from within, and the prevalence of conflict and tension is a contributing factor to the rise of cartels and organized crime regionally.

In southern Africa, agreements have been reached to withdraw Cuban troops from Angola, where they had been stationed in support of the Angolan government, as part of a broader settlement that also provides for South African withdrawal from Namibia. The Security Council will debate the role of the United Nations in securing peace in the region going forward. Namibia has sought independence from South African administration since 1966, and the asymmetric conflict there is now well over a decade old. With a resolution in sight, the international community must still consider what allowed such a prolonged conflict to persist, and what can be done to resolve similar conflicts elsewhere.

Finally, though no active conflict has yet broken out, ethnic tensions are rising in Yugoslavia, and some question the long-term stability of the federated state. Josip Broz Tito, who led the country until his death in 1980, was a unifying figure who helped hold its diverse regions together. In the years since, economic conditions have worsened considerably, and ethnic nationalism has emerged as a significant political force. The ruling communist party retains formal control of the country, but its actual grip on power is increasingly in question amid widespread unrest and dissatisfaction.



Themes

Bipolarity

Since the late 1940s, the world has operated on a bipolar model of power distribution. The United States and its allies, also known as the “first world,” have stood in opposition to and conflict with the Soviet Union and its allies, also known as the “second world.” Though efforts were made for the “third world,” those countries aligned with neither power, to assert itself as an independent bloc, those efforts did not culminate in the formation of a strong alternative power against the superpowers. Now, it seems that bipolarity may be reaching its end.

The failure of a third pole to materialize during the Cold War serves to illustrate the factors which have allowed each superpower to become a pole around which other countries orbit. Each has an economic base capable of supporting not just itself, but a distributed network of states which it trades with and offers support to. Each is also able to develop and maintain a sophisticated independent military which is on par with its superpower opponent. Each has a network of aligned states which it leads and which broadly cooperate with it. Finally, each has an ideological vision which unifies its block, places it in opposition to the other pole of the international system, and which it can export globally. Looking at these factors, the failure of the Non-Aligned Movement to coalesce into a third pole may have some explanation rooted in the fact that it was an ideologically diverse group of developing countries which did not share a unified political or military cause. There are many other ways to think about the Non-Aligned Movement, its goals, and how and whether it failed, but this framing also allows us to look at the present state of the world in 1989.

As the Soviet Union’s grip on the Eastern Bloc appears to be weakening, some are speaking of an emerging unipolar order, with the United States as the undisputed global power without equal. That has not yet come to pass, and it is not the only alternative to a bipolar world order. Other thinkers have pointed to the emerging economic strength of Japan, or a more integrated Western Europe, and argue that the future may not be a unipolar nor bipolar distribution of global power, but a multipolar world in which several significant blocs exist with their own centers of gravity. As you consider this guide and the events of this year, consider how a unipolar or multipolar world would differ from a bipolar world. Also consider how countries would make decisions under each system, and what factors might lead the world towards or away from these varying distributions of power. How do political actors need to change their calculus if there are one, two, or more major blocs that they need to maneuver around? Do more power blocs represent more tools that a non-aligned country can play off each other, or is each bloc a different threat to those countries’ independence and sovereignty? Finally, you should consider whether the other proposed poles of a multipolar world order currently have the capacity to become a pole in the way the United States and Soviet Union are, what they might lack as compared to the existing superpowers, and what the costs and benefits of attaining



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superpower status might be. Western Europe has no integrated military, nor a particular ideological vision. Japan has a self defense force, consciously not styled as a military, which is primarily concerned with defending its own territorial integrity. Taking these examples and others you can think of, what are the challenges to becoming a pole of the international system, and how might policy makers consider whether to pursue that goal?

Also keep in mind, however, that the world remains in a bipolar distribution of power. Though the Soviet Union has certainly faltered, it remains a superpower not only due to its nuclear arsenal, but also due to its global influence and standing internationally. On paper, it still remains a pole of the international system, and one of the major outstanding questions for the international community is how close that perception is to reality. Consider how a policy maker can determine the difference between a power which has stumbled, and one which is in true decline, and what the impacts of that difference are. Also consider how a policy maker can navigate a situation where the answer to that question remains deeply uncertain.

A weakening superpower does not only present a challenge to the state in question. For its allies, who may rely on the superpower for economic, military, and political support, the weakening poses a threat to those pillars of support. For adversaries, potential instability may not be limited to the weakening power, and the loss of a predictable opponent may require refiguring the adversary's own geopolitical and strategic considerations. Consider how both allies and enemies of a declining superpower may need to reorient themselves in the wake of a superpower's collapse, and how each group should act when that collapse is still largely theoretical.

What benefits does superpower status convey to a country, and do those benefits outweigh the costs of maintaining global superpower competition? What would descending from the status of superpower actually mean in practice, and how far should a superpower or its allies go to maintain the status quo rather than accept that decline? Are there different interests at play between the people of a superpower and that country's leadership, and if so, how should the international community weigh or address that difference? More importantly, are there limits to what international actors can legitimately or effectively do to influence the internal politics of a powerful country, even one that appears to be faltering?

Finally, remember that this is not the first time the international system has undergone a shift in its distribution of power. At the turn of the 20th Century, the world was divided in a multipolar system of European great powers in contest with each other. The transition to a bipolar world order arguably began in 1914, and though the bipolar world was taking shape in 1945, many argue that the bipolar world order was not cemented until 1956.¹³ What does the historical precedent suggest for leaders looking at a potential transition of power in 1989? Are there particular lessons to be learned or traps to be avoided?

¹³ CIMUN XXII's state of the world document discusses this period of hegemonic transition in more detail. You can also see CIMUN XXII in review on cimun.org for analysis of how last year's 1956 simulation addressed this seminal period.



Legitimacy in Chaotic Times

Legitimacy is the story that a state tells about its own existence in order to justify why it is governed the way it is. A state which is seen as very legitimate is one in which many citizens accept and support the story of that state's legitimacy. A state which is illegitimate, on the other hand, is one in which some critical mass of the population rejects that story. Throughout the world, 1989 represents a time of crisis. Student unrest, political instability, and geopolitical uncertainty are widespread, and each presents a challenge to the legitimacy of the countries which are impacted. As we consider how countries will respond to the crises impacting their legitimacy, it is helpful to think about the ways that a state can assert its legitimacy in the first place.

Types of Legitimacy:

An inexhaustive list of types of legitimacy includes procedural legitimacy, results-based legitimacy, legitimacy based in tradition or national identity, and ideological legitimacy. It is important to note that no single model can explain every way that a government or social structure maintains legitimacy. Additionally, remember that even outside of a state's perceived legitimacy, the ability to use police or military force is another lever which can suppress dissatisfaction. This is even more true where a powerful external backer is willing to help provide force to maintain a government.

Within this simplified framework, procedural legitimacy is legitimacy that a government claims via the procedures, usually elections, which are used to select a country's leadership. In liberal democracies, procedural legitimacy is embodied in the idea that the government has the right to make decisions because it was put into place via electoral procedures that represent the will of the governed. While this is by far the most common type of procedural legitimacy in the modern world, systems which use meritocratic selection to appoint government figures, or which use particular decision-making techniques also fall under this umbrella.¹⁴ Remember that even within these four categories, there are significant and meaningful differences. The story of legitimacy in a republic (such as the United States), which derives procedural legitimacy purely from its elections as an embodiment of popular will, is subtly different from procedural legitimacy in a constitutional monarchy (such as the United Kingdom) where procedural legitimacy is partly bound up in tradition, and the connection of modern procedure back to a legacy of prior sources of legitimacy.

Results-based legitimacy, on the other hand, is when a government justifies its existence on the basis of the things which the government provides for the population of the country. The

¹⁴ For an example of the latter: democratic centralism, the concept of internal debate within a political party, but strict public adherence to a decision once it has been made, is a form of procedural legitimacy. The perceived legitimacy of a decision is rooted in the process of internal debate, while that decision's legitimacy is projected outward by members of that party agreeing not to criticize or disagree with that decision.



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classic example of this type of legitimacy is the so-called petrostate, such as Saudi Arabia. One theory for how autocratic governments remain in power in many of these states is that when governments can provide basic services and low or nonexistent tax burdens via oil proceeds, citizens do not expect an active say in governance, and are generally willing to accept an autocratic government so long as it continues to provide results. This form of legitimacy is not limited to petrostates, however. Every government, to some degree, is perceived as legitimate or illegitimate based on that government's ability to provide for the people it governs. What a government is expected to deliver has changed greatly over time. In the medieval era, the perceived legitimacy of a monarch might be tied to expectations that they should provide safety from violence, and access to food for citizens. In the modern era, more complex demands such as access to consumer goods, healthcare, economic opportunity, and increasing standards of living are all an extension of what we have termed results-based legitimacy.

Legitimacy based in tradition and national identity are in some sense simpler than the previous two categories. Here, the legitimacy of a state and its government is tied to a narrative of that state's connection to the past, or its embodiment of an imagined community. This kind of legitimacy can be seen in stories that tie a state's origin to a mythologized or heightened past, such as a monarchy which traces its origins back to a mythologized king,¹⁵ or to a heightened memory of the country's origin.¹⁶ Of our four categories, legitimacy based in tradition or national identity is the most direct case of storytelling as the direct source of legitimacy. Identification with a historical tradition or an imagined community says almost nothing about how a government functions or what a government should do, relying on emotional association rather than results, processes, or promises to contribute to a state's legitimacy.

Finally, we have identified ideological legitimacy. Rather than being a story about the history or origin of the state, ideological legitimacy is based on what a state says about how the world should function, and how it embodies those ideals. In Marxist-Leninist states, ideological legitimacy comes from the belief that communism is the next stage in historical development after capitalism, that that transition is inevitable, and that a world where class society gives way to shared ownership of the means of production is a moral good. In these countries, part of the state's legitimacy is tied to the idea that the state is working to achieve the goal of creating communism. In the United States, as an alternative example, ideological legitimacy comes from ideas like the United States being a "melting pot," that its system of government provides freedom to citizens, and that it provides everyone with the opportunity to succeed on their own merits. These particular stories do not merely provide an explanation for why a form of

¹⁵ As an example, the Norwegian monarchy currently traces its origins to Harald Fairhair, a king whose historical existence has been questioned. Though modern British monarchs no longer do so, in the Tudor period, they traced their family's origin to the legendary figure of King Arthur.

¹⁶ Think, for example, of the outsized status that figures like George Washington, Mao Zedong, and Vladimir Lenin are given in the memory of their country's origin. Though these figures were certainly important, even crucial to the events that led to their countries being established, modern recollection of these figures paints them as larger than life.



government is good, they can also provide a balm for less savory aspects of a form of government. In the American context, societal inequality is often explained as a result of the meritocratic system provided by the country's free-market system. In Marxist-Leninist states, a lack of popular participation in governance is explained by the idea that the government must be insulated from those who may seek to waver from the path towards communism. Ideological legitimacy can also be a double-edged sword. If a state's account of its own legitimacy is rooted in an argument that the state adheres to a particular ideology, failure to make good on that ideological promise can undermine the state's legitimacy. In many Eastern Bloc countries, the Marxist-Leninist promise of a rational, planned economy, has sharpened criticisms as those centrally planned economies have faced periods of stagnation and economic malaise.

Crises of Legitimacy:

Most states rely on some combination of these and other factors to establish their legitimacy and to argue why their system of government should continue to exist. To some extent, even the most seemingly-authoritarian system is only able to function because the people that system governs are willing to accept its existence.¹⁷ If enough members of a society are unhappy with a system of government, and are willing to work against that government actively, that government cannot persist. Some political scientists argue that if 3.5% of a population is willing to join in nonviolent protest for a cause, that cause is likely to succeed.¹⁸ While this particular figure can be argued, the underlying truth that all governments require some amount of consent from the governed in order to function remains true.

In 1989, the challenge that many countries face is how to maintain legitimacy in the face of unprecedented chaos, and breakdowns in the traditional levers that were used to project their governments' legitimacy. When economic crises hit, that often means that the "results-based" legitimacy of the state falters. People expect their government to succeed at providing certain benefits, and disruptions to those benefits make them more willing to question whether a different government would be better.

¹⁷ Note that what "acceptance" means in this context can vary. Some scholars argue that a sufficient degree of coercion may be enough to maintain an autocratic form of government indefinitely by force alone. In this framing, "acceptance" is less about being satisfied or ambivalent towards the existing form of government, and more about whether a person who is unsatisfied with a form of government is willing to risk the potential consequences of speaking out.

¹⁸ Note that the so-called 3.5% rule in political science was not formulated until Erica Chenoweth's work in 2013, which drew on work done in the 1990s by Mark Lichbach. There is not a firm consensus on the validity of the 3.5% rule, and it is best understood as one idea about how power functions amongst many. In particular, keep in mind that the 3.5% rule has been criticized for failing to account for violent revolutions, and that even its proponents describe it primarily as a way of understanding actions taken against autocratic regimes, not as a model which generalizes to protest in a liberal democracy or other political context.



Crises of Legitimacy in Autocratic Systems:

In autocratic systems, these questions turn not just to a different government, but different forms of government, in part because an autocratic system provides limited means for dissatisfied citizens to seek change. In these circumstances, governments must seek to bolster their legitimacy in other ways. Can leaning on nationalism or ideological conviction help to spur citizens through an uncertain time? Alternatively, can the use of force (either via the domestic police or military, or via external backing) contain discontent? If either leaning on other forms of legitimacy or leaning on force can work for a time, what happens when that time is up and a crisis still hasn't been resolved? What happens when a state has relied on external backing to maintain control for a long time, and the source of that external backing seems to be wavering in its conviction?

Another important factor many countries in 1989 need to consider is elite fracture. When a country's ruling elites are unified in their outlook, their monopoly on established forms of power can make it difficult for those who are discontent to bring about change. If, however, elites disagree on how to respond to a crisis, that creates openings for popular movements to advocate for change. In particular, many countries in 1989 have factions within their governments who seek political and economic reform, and others who are opposed to those reforms. This division creates political ground for reformist factions to enter, but it also raises a question. What does it say about a state's legitimacy when the leaders of a government cannot agree on how to govern?

Taken from another direction, we can ask how legitimacy factors into the success or failure of a reformist movement. What does a movement seeking reform have to do to establish that it should change the way that power is exercised in a country? How can a reformist movement act against the legitimacy of an existing government, and how can it establish its own legitimacy? Because popular movements typically do not have the backing of police or military force to push for reform in the way that a state can use those levers of power to account for a lack of legitimacy, the story that a popular movement tells about itself and the legitimacy of its cause is even more central than for state actors. Think about what story the reformist movements of 1989 want to tell about themselves, and how state actors can respond to those efforts.

Finally, returning to the various crises that are eroding the legitimacy of states around the world in 1989, consider one other lever that the governments of these states may control: information. Throughout the Cold War, countries on both sides attempted in various ways to spread information and propaganda across the Iron Curtain, and alternatively to contain information within their own bloc or country. In the face of unrest, how can a government use control over information to impact the course of events? What are the potential consequences to utilizing control over information? What happens if information spreads despite a government's best efforts to contain it, or if the government's control over the spread of information is suddenly reduced?



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As you approach 1989, consider what levers are available to an autocratic government when a chaotic period of time or confluence of unfavorable events lead to an acute crisis of legitimacy. How can popular pressure be addressed before it overthrows the system entirely? How does popular pressure impact these systems differently than in a more liberal form of government? Are there methods for an autocratic government to project or demonstrate legitimacy even if major segments of the population feel unrepresented or failed by the government?

Crises of Legitimacy in Liberal Systems:

On the other hand, consider the impact of chaotic times in a liberal system of government. With regular elections, how does chaos and dissatisfaction put different pressures on leaders as compared to a more autocratic system? While regular elections may provide an outlet for dissatisfied citizens to vote out an incumbent, elections happen on a fixed schedule, and political crises do not. If a political crisis occurs well before an election is scheduled, is the prospect of that future election enough to relieve discontent in the meantime?

Another advantage that a liberal system has is that dissatisfaction with a government and its decisions can be disentangled from dissatisfaction with the system as a whole. If a government's legitimacy is fatally compromised, a liberal system offers the opportunity to replace that government while the system remains intact. In an autocratic system, the failure of the government often becomes a failure of the system because the system and the government are so deeply intertwined. However, what happens in a liberal system of government if successive elections continue to provide governments that do not resolve a problem or set of problems? How might this impact the legitimacy of the system as a whole? Even if a crisis is eventually resolved, does the disconnect between the government and the system mean that the memory of a long-term problem will linger in citizens' minds as an issue with the system itself?

Liberal systems also face the issue of elite fracture, but in a different form. Disagreement between opposing parties is expected, but what happens when it leads to gridlock? If a government is consistently unable to make decisions because opposing factions prevent a decision from being made, does that impact the perceived legitimacy of the system? What are the impacts on a state's procedural legitimacy if citizens start to believe that the procedures themselves are giving rise to issues of paralysis and indecision? In systems which rely on coalition governments, such fractures can become glaringly obvious as even small parties within a coalition government may be able to grind government activity to a halt if their particular demands are not met, or they find government policy disagreeable.

It is also worth noting that the four forms of legitimacy discussed above do not belong to a single group in a liberal system. While we have considered that an opposition movement in an autocratic system may need to develop and assert its own form of legitimacy, that type of contested legitimacy is the norm between opposing parties in a liberal system. Parties will argue about whether they will provide better results, how their party embodies national ideals or



history, and distinctions in ideological disposition. These kinds of arguments do not happen in an autocratic system. How does institutionalizing these divisions impact legitimacy in a liberal system of government? Does it provide an outlet for discontent? Does it allow for more widespread buy-in by allowing competing narratives of legitimacy to coexist? Does contesting legitimacy make a liberal system more resilient by creating an outlet for grievances, or does it create vulnerabilities by giving dissatisfied groups a ready-made vehicle to capitalize on dissatisfaction?

Expanding on the idea of capitalizing on dissatisfaction, chaotic times in liberal systems often produce candidates and political movements which reject the “establishment” narrative about their legitimacy. These candidates, who present themselves as something outside the system, present an interesting question. When they are elected, is that the system successfully absorbing and channeling discontent back into the established systems of power, or is there something damaging to the legitimacy of a liberal system of government when it brings someone to power who has challenged that system’s legitimacy?

Taken together, these various questions point towards a larger, overarching question. What is the difference between a crisis of legitimacy in an autocratic system and a liberal system? Can a liberal democracy experience the kind of terminal decline that an autocracy can, or is it fundamentally different? Do procedural safety valves mean that a crisis can always be averted, that a terminal crisis is simply harder to reach, or do those safety valves merely delay a crisis which will eventually arrive?

There are no simple answers to any of these questions, and you should think about them as you consider the issues facing the world in 1989.

The Limits of Superpower Influence

Since the beginning of the Cold War, the unspoken contract undergirding the superpower blocs has been that the superpower would provide political, military, and economic support in exchange for the political alignment of its bloc members. In the West, soft power has generally been the tool used to maintain that discipline, along with the fact that the United States’s allies have typically shared in its opposition to Soviet communism without a need for prior intervention.¹⁹ In the Soviet Bloc, on the other hand, military force has repeatedly been used to uphold the political alignment of bloc members, such as in Budapest in 1956 when Hungary attempted to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, or in the 1968 suppression of the Prague Spring.

However, by 1989, the structure of that agreement, particularly in the Soviet Bloc, is uncertain. General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev has spoken explicitly of socialist states having “freedom of choice” in how they manage their internal affairs, suggesting that Moscow may not employ military force to maintain control over its bloc going forward. This comes alongside

¹⁹ Though note China, Greece, Turkey, Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, and regime change in Central and South America as examples where the United States was willing to use hard power to establish (or attempt to establish) an allied state.



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Gorbachev's own push for reforms within the Soviet Union, and is a clear suggestion that such reforms should not be limited to just the Soviet context. While no crisis has yet tested Moscow's true willingness to let countries in the Eastern Bloc diverge from their prior political cohesion to the Soviet Union, the question is not merely academic. In February, the government of Poland is going to sit down with Solidarity, an independent trade union which seeks serious reforms to Poland's system of government, and which would certainly have been met with military force in prior years. The question now is whether Moscow will accept the results of these talks, whether it will allow them to commence without interference, and what this apparent change in policy would mean. Is it a result of Gorbachev's reformist vision, or a tacit acknowledgment that the Soviet Union no longer has the power to maintain its firm grip on states in Eastern Europe?

On the other hand, East Germany represents an inversion of Poland. Erich Honecker has rejected Soviet reform, and remarked that the German Democratic Republic is under no obligation to follow the Soviet lead in "redecorating," as he calls it. This too is a test of the cohesion of the Soviet Bloc. The GDR is widely acknowledged as one of the most successful states within the Eastern Bloc, and its refusal to follow the Soviet lead towards reform begs another question. If the Soviet Union itself is undergoing reforms, will Mikhail Gorbachev accept an ally within the bloc which is unwilling to do so?

In the West, superpower influence is being challenged more subtly. NATO, the premier emblem of the American bloc, has never rested its cohesion solely on treaty language. Fundamentally, it relies on the members of the organization viewing American leadership as serving their own interests, and benefitting their own countries. The threat of American occupation has never been a credible factor in these countries' decisions, rather the existential threat underlying NATO has been the reliance of Western Europe on the United States in the face of Soviet conventional military forces.

As political and diplomatic winds shift, the stability of NATO is far from certain. France has characteristically remained somewhat aloof from NATO's integrated command structure, and still retains its own nuclear deterrent. West Germany, on the other hand, is facing growing internal pressure from citizens who view NATO membership as something which may invite destruction in the event of war rather than averting war entirely. With the INF treaty eliminating intermediate range nuclear weapons, short range systems which would primarily impact German soil in the event of war are what remains to be modernized. While the United States and United Kingdom favor such modernizations, domestic pressure in West Germany opposes them. Additionally, West Germany has pursued its own diplomatic stance towards East Germany and the Soviet Union. Particularly as the Soviet Union appears to be softening, and thus the existential threat to Western Europe may be softening as well, the operative question is what influence the United States will have to continue maintaining its bloc alliances.

Thus, on both sides of the Cold War, the evolving geopolitical situation of 1989 raises serious questions about what the function of geopolitical blocs truly is, who those blocs serve, and how they can respond to an evolving world.



Reform and Resistance

In numerous countries around the world, the question of the day is whether the government will bow to calls for reform, or maintain an existing autocratic system. In the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev is championing reform from the heights of power. In Iran, the Ayatollah has called together important figures to debate revising the country's constitution. In Poland, a mass movement has given rise to upcoming talks about reforming the country's system of government. In China, the rumblings of student protest ask why political liberalization has not accompanied economic liberalization.

In each of these examples, though the groups which advocate reform are different, the same fundamental questions are being asked. Who currently holds power? Who is asking for a change in how power is distributed within the country? What motivates the reformist movement? What obstacles does that movement face, both in terms of overt opposition, and entrenched power structures?

The wide range of groups that seek reform demonstrates that there is no one-size-fits-all answer to these questions. In the case of the Soviet Union, the Communist Party itself has numerous members, including many within the government, who do not agree with Mikhail Gorbachev's vision, and who are resistant to reform. In Poland and China, while there are calls for reform amongst the population, the bulk of those holding government power support the system within which they currently hold power. In Iran, though there is no single group opposed to reform, opening the door to reform raises questions about how changing the distribution of power within the system of government will impact those who currently hold power.

As you consider various examples of groups seeking reform throughout this conference, keep in mind the full picture of who those reforms will benefit, and who may feel threatened by those reforms, and consider how those shifting perspectives influence the likelihood that these reforms will succeed.

Individuals and Structures

While this guide has often spoken of "the Soviet Union," "West Germany," "the United States," and other countries as monolithic entities acting on the world stage, it is important to remember that these countries are not actually single entities, nor do they make decisions or take actions. Each action taken by a country is, in reality, a decision made by its government, whether a single person or a collection of people is responsible. The implementation of those decisions is communicated by individuals, and carried out by even more individuals. This section asks you to consider two opposing ideas. On one hand, the idea that individual people at particular moments can have a significant personal impact on the course of events on the global stage, and on the other hand, that there are significant factors outside of any person's control which constrain the actions and decisions of even the most powerful individual people.



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Consider first the factors which can make the individual character of a leader important. The health, temperament, ideological outlook, and personal relationships of a leader can all influence how they might react to a crisis, communicate with another world leader, or be seen by audiences both domestic and international. A powerful leader who advocates reform will have a very different impact than one who opposes it wholeheartedly. A leader who is sick at the moment of an international crisis will react with less vigor and clarity than one who is healthy. Even the personal rapport that one world leader develops with another may influence the flow of high level negotiations between nations. All of these are very personal, individual factors. Going beyond these factors, which are abstract, decisions made by individual leaders in moments of crisis have an unmistakable influence on how those crises play out. Whether or not to mobilize for war may be the decision that changes whether or not a war will happen. Whether to escalate a conflict or seek accord may completely reshape how an action is seen by the international community. Consider not just the personality and ideology of individual policy makers, but how their history, the institutional context they find themselves in, and the personal stakes of their decisions might influence how they make those decisions.

On the other hand, consider what context a leader or policy maker makes decisions within. Even in the most autocratic system, orders from the top must be delegated to people who will implement them, and further delegated to those who will carry out whatever plan eventually forms. The systems that exist to carry out these decisions have their own inertia: established ways of doing things, expectations of what form a plan should take and how resources should be allocated, even established rivalries and politics within and between groups within the government and society. Each of these pieces of context is a restriction on how a policy maker can actually make decisions. They are not overt, written rules, but invisible barriers that influence what is achievable within the existing system.

Beyond the individual and the institutional, consider forces that operate beyond any human control. A prior decade of economic policy creates the expectations, concerns, and anxieties which new economic policy must respond to. Ideological precepts upheld for generations create broad societal expectations about how government should function. Population dynamics and demographic trends enforce certain requirements and limitations on government policy, and do so in a way that cannot be shaped by any leader. To what extent are leaders able to freely make decisions once you consider the myriad structural factors that create the conditions they are making decisions within, and the acceptable decisions which are available to them.

The tension between these two ideas: individual agency and structural forces, is at the heart of analyzing historical and political events. If we treat outcomes as purely a result of individual actors, we may attribute something to a single person in the right (or wrong) place at the right (or wrong) time which was actually the result of years or decades of planning and preparation. On the other hand, if we ignore individuals entirely, we may assume that concrete, measurable explanations exist where human decisionmaking actually had a stronger influence.



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Neither extreme gives an accurate understanding of historical events, nor of how politics and diplomacy function. The correct answer is a synthesis of the two, understanding the role of humans in making history even in the midst of circumstances that they had no role in choosing.

As you prepare, apply this thinking to the topics you are asked to consider. Which individual people had a role in creating the crisis, and which individual people might have a role in resolving it? What structural factors contribute to the ongoing crisis, and to what degree are those structural factors something that people can influence directly? How can we evaluate the balance between these two explanations in an individual context? Does the strength, determination, or persona of an individual leader or policy maker have the potential to overcome structural obstacles that a different ruler may have been unable to overcome? To what degree do we base our analysis of a leader on things that are truly within their power, as opposed to projecting ideas of strength, success, and accomplishment onto them which may have arisen from factors outside their control? Alternatively, consider where pointing towards structural factors may be an excuse for poor leadership, and where more adroit decision making might have salvaged a situation.

There are no simple answers to these questions. This December, as you participate in CIMUN XXIII, consider how your experiences reflect the unstable balance between personal and structural influence, and whether you can identify particular moments where the opportunity for individual action and influence presents itself.



CIMUN XXIII GUIDE TO DELEGATE PREPARATION

Is this your first Model United Nations Conference? Are you an experienced delegate who is not experienced with the unique nature of CIMUN? Are you an experienced CIMUN attendee looking for advice? If you fit any of those descriptions, this memo was written for you. The purpose of this memo is to explain the features of our conference that are different from others you may have attended in the past. We hope this memo helps you and your fellow delegates prepare for all CIMUN has to offer.

Introduction to Crisis

Traditional Model UN committees consist of delegates representing countries in UN bodies, or other international organizations. For example, you could represent Senegal in the United Nations General Assembly, or Brazil in the World Trade Organization.

These committees have *agenda items*, which are topics that are set by the conference before it begins. Throughout the conference, delegates debate these issues and form coalitions (or *blocs*) with other countries they want to work with. Then, these delegates work together to write *resolutions*, which are long-form pieces of legislation expressing policy positions and developing solutions to the issues raised in the agenda item. All of the conference is spent discussing these issues, then writing and debating resolutions. Your Model UN team or club has likely taught you this flow of debate.

Crisis adds a wrinkle to this predictable flow. Crises are unpredictable, emergent scenarios that delegates must respond to immediately. For example, imagine you are a delegate for France in the United Nations Security Council. Suddenly, while your committee is discussing one of its topics, an analyst enters the room to inform your committee that American and Chinese ships have fired on each other in the Taiwan Strait. This is a *crisis update*. These crisis updates can come in many forms, from your committee's Political Officer presenting an issue, to a breaking news article in the CIMUN Chronicle, to a CNN briefing.

Certain Model UN committees do not debate resolutions. Instead, they spend the whole conference responding to these crises, debating and creating action plans. Additionally, instead of representing countries in UN bodies, they represent specific people in smaller committees like national cabinets. At CIMUN, these committees are called *Cabinets*, as many of them simulate national cabinets; they can also be referred to as *continuous crisis committees* or simply *crisis committees*.



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Even so, at CIMUN, it is entirely possible for non-Cabinets to be asked to respond to occasional crises, as our world is constantly changing and evolving. Any committee at CIMUN could receive a crisis to handle, no matter how large. For example, the IAEA could be called on to respond to a nuclear accident, the United Nations General Assembly could be called to respond to imminent matters of international peace and security, the Organization of American States could be called to address an emerging diplomatic breach between countries in the Western hemisphere – all situations requiring immediate action from the most important players on the global stage.

At CIMUN, we have a specific department whose job is to make these crises for the whole conference. The *Department of Simulations* consists of CIMUN staffers who pick its committees and topics, write background guides, and create the different updates and scenarios you will respond to during the conference weekend. They fulfill the same role that traditional Model UN conferences call *Crisis Directors* or *crisis staff*. Think of Simulations like the brain of the whole conference – we take information on what’s happening and being decided in every individual committee and cabinet, process it, and determine how it all fits together. We then send out the results in the form of crisis updates. These updates take many different shapes, from guest speakers in different committees to breaking news updates to classified memos.

Simulations staff at CIMUN are not limited to the backroom! Every committee will have a *Political Officer* posted to their Dais. The role of the Political Officer is to serve as the substantive expert for the committee, monitoring debate and substantive documents for the accuracy of national positions and content. Political Officers are also there to serve as a liaison between your committee and your *Home Government*, the team in the backroom which processes and responds to the events of the conference. If you are in a general committee and looking to contact your Home Government or interact with a crisis update in a creative way, your Political Officer is the first person you should speak to or pass a note to.

Cross-Committee Interactions

Many Model UN conferences have *Joint Crisis Committees* – usually two continuous crisis committees that are related to each other and exist in the same universe. Consequently, the actions one committee takes directly impacts the other. Crisis updates can impact both committees at the same time.

CIMUN is special – all of CIMUN is, in a sense, one giant Joint Crisis Committee. Every single one of CIMUN’s committees and cabinets exist in the same universe as part of the same crisis arc. Thus, each has the ability to impact the overall story of the conference. This year, all



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CIMUN's committees will take place in 1989, with the same start date of **January 22nd, 1956**. What happens in any committee has the potential to directly affect all the others.

For example, if CIMUN XXIII's Cabinet of the United Kingdom was to embargo the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Council of Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran would receive a crisis update detailing the United Kingdom's embargo. What makes CIMUN special is that every other relevant committee and cabinet will receive this same update, and all committees and cabinets will be able to read and follow the news on the CIMUN Chronicle, our in-conference newspaper. Every other committee and cabinet then has the ability to choose how to respond. Other cabinets could choose to ignore or support this embargo, the Security Council or General Assembly could choose to condemn the action or work to organize negotiations, the Economic & Social Council could choose to send humanitarian aid if the embargo causes prolonged suffering. The limit on how events play out is the creativity and political will of the bodies participating in our simulation.

Any committee or cabinet has the capacity to influence and even directly interact with any other committee or cabinet at CIMUN. The Security Council can try and negotiate peace talks between various cabinets. Cabinets can arrange meetings with other cabinets, try to petition other committees for help, even create unofficial agreements and official treaties with each other. The Organization of American States can provide unified support to Cabinet actions. The Council of Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran can write legislation for the Guardian Council to debate and pass. The U.S. Senate can conduct oversight hearings on the work of the U.S. Cabinet. Our rules of procedure provide ways for some of these interactions to play out formally, but our Department of Simulations is equipped to respond to actions outside of those predicted in the rules of procedure. *The CIMUN team **highly** encourages you to be creative – if you are unsure if your idea will work, just ask your committee's Political Officer! Delegates should also note that CIMUN gives out specific, full-conference awards for delegates who do a notably good job interacting in a creative, intelligent manner across different committees.*

How much interacting your committee does with others will significantly vary depending on what committee you are in. If you are in a committee whose primary focus is writing and debating resolutions, it is unlikely you will spend much time interacting with other bodies. However, even if you are in a resolution-focused committee, we encourage you to read the news and stay invested in what's happening in the world around you. You never know when a general committee may become enmeshed in an international crisis when they least expect it. The level of interactivity you can expect depends on whether you are in a non-crisis committee, such as the United Nations General Assembly or IAEA, a hybrid committee such as the United States Senate or NATO, or a crisis committee such as the Cabinet of the United States or the Cabinet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.



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Heads of Government

One of the most distinguishing features of CIMUN is its Heads of Government, or HOGs. In real-life politics, national cabinets are advisory committees to Heads of Government, the individuals with ultimate decision-making power over a country's government. (They are not bodies that pass all policy via a simple majority vote on directives.) As an example, the United States' President is its Head of Government. This means that cabinets do not make decisions by majority rule. Rather, the Head of Government gets the input of their advisors and makes a final decision on how to proceed.

Each national cabinet at CIMUN will have its HOG present – if you are in the 1989 U.S. Cabinet, for example, President George H.W. Bush will be there to guide debate. Instead of cabinet members voting on individual solutions or directives, with the ones getting a majority vote passing and being enacted, HOGs will have final say over everything that gets done in their Cabinet. Some HOGs may take the majority opinion into account when making their choices on how to respond to crisis updates. Others may have strong opinions and go against the wishes of their Cabinet ministers.

Delegates in general committees (i.e. not cabinets) are advised that HOGs still exist and actively impact the rest of CIMUN's world, even outside the Cabinets. For example, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Helmut Kohl, could still give a speech to the UN General Assembly that will have a significant impact on the country's international reputation. HOGs will be active forces in shaping the story of CIMUN XXIII, whether or not they are the head of your specific committee.

Delegates in national legislatures should also be advised that they will be interacting with both their country's Head of Government and their political parties' leader, which we refer to as a mini-HOG. For example, if you are a Democrat in the U.S. Senate, you will also be answering to Senate Majority Leader George J. Mitchell (D-ME), represented by a CIMUN staffer who will lead your party caucus sessions and work to maintain unified strategic objectives among the Democrats in committee.

The Heads of Government for CIMUN XXIII are the following:

- Cabinet of the United States of America, 1989:
 - President George H.W. Bush
- Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 1989: President,
 - Mikhail Gorbachev
- Cabinet of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 1989:
 - Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher



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- Council of Ministers of the German Democratic Republic, 1989:
 - Chairman of the State Council Erich Honecker
- National Security Council of the Federal Republic of Germany, 1989:
 - Chancellor Helmut Kohl
- Council of Ministers of the Polish People's Republic, 1989:
 - Chairman of the Council of State Wojciech Jaruzelski
- State Council of the People's Republic of China, 1989:
 - Party Military Chief Deng Xiaoping
- Council of Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 1989:
 - Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini
 - Prime Minister Mir-Hossein Mousavi
- United States Senate, 1989:
 - Vice President and President Pro Tempore of the Senate Dan Quayle
 - Majority Leader: Senator George Mitchell
 - Minority Leader: Senator Bob Dole
- Guardian Council of the Constitution of Iran, 1989:
 - Chairman of the Assembly of Experts Ali Meshkini
 - President of Iran Ali Khamenei

The Media – CIMUN News Network and International Press Delegation

Delegates, advisors, and parents can keep up with conference developments through CIMUN News Network (CNN) broadcast programming; *The CIMUN Chronicle*, a digital newspaper featuring stories written by our press delegates; and the CIMUN social media accounts, which cover both IPD and CNN developments. You can find out more about where to keep up with CIMUN on cimun.org

The *CIMUN News Network*, or CNN, is a staff-produced television news broadcast program. CNN covers breaking news from the conference and is displayed during committee sessions to communicate relevant information about the world. It is essential delegates pay attention to ongoing CNN coverage in order to stay up to date on international political developments.

Delegates can also track ongoing news in greater detail via the website of the *International Press Delegation (IPD)*. The IPD consists of delegates who are all part of a newsroom working together to write stories covering what is happening across CIMUN. With the help of their Executive Editor and Assistant Editors, IPD delegates identify relevant stories and sources, and produce news articles that are published in the *CIMUN Chronicle*. All CIMUN Chronicle articles are accessible online.



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IPD delegates are allowed to move around the hotel and visit various committees throughout the conference. Delegates' credentials, which must be worn at all times, will indicate if a delegate is a member of the IPD. IPD delegates are encouraged to use suspensions in debate to converse with delegates or politely take conversations to the hallway. General and specialized committee delegates are encouraged to use interviews with IPD delegates to advance their nations' or parties' agendas. Coverage in the CIMUN Chronicle can bolster support for a draft resolution or bill, enable delegates or legislators to publicly respond to actions by other delegates, or help pressure fellow committee members to adopt certain positions or shift debate topics. Committees may vote to hold a "closed session" where non-members, including IPD delegates, are cleared out of the room.

To enable cabinet delegates to interact with the IPD, on occasion, all IPD delegates will be gathered for a press conference. A representative from each cabinet will have a limited period of time to deliver a statement to the press. Following those statements, the representatives will take a limited number of questions, then everyone present will be able to speak freely in a "gaggle" setting. It is vital that cabinet representatives are able to confidently answer IPD delegates' questions and determine what information can be shared versus what must be kept secret. The press conferences may be treated as an opportunity to manipulate the press, but such behavior can also provoke greater scrutiny and interest. Cabinet delegates should also be wary of speaking to the press without permission from their Head of Government and the rest of the cabinet, as this can result in serious consequences.

Delegates should think critically about how to use CIMUN's Media to the fullest in order to advance their strategic agenda. Some of CIMUN's most memorable moments – from impeachment to leaks – have begun with a story in the CIMUN Chronicle.

International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. It exists to adjudicate legal disputes between states that agree to be subject to its ruling. The ICJ has the jurisdiction to rule on cases involving the Charter of the United Nations and other international treaties and conventions in force.

At CIMUN, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) plays a role across the entire conference – non-ICJ delegates are encouraged to take advantage of the ICJ as an alternative route to solve problems, resolve disputes between countries, and advance political agendas. Much like traditional ICJ committees, CIMUN's ICJ will have a pre-set docket of cases to hear. Even so, we encourage delegates at CIMUN to bring their own cases to the ICJ. CIMUN's ICJ



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will then debate whether they have jurisdiction, hear arguments from both sides, and make a ruling.

To raise a case before the ICJ, delegates, on behalf of the country they represent, should submit a Written Application to their Political Officer that includes the following pieces of information:

- Subject of the Dispute. Clearly identify what is being disputed and what the ICJ needs to rule on.
- Parties Involved. Identify all States involved in the case.
- Basis of Jurisdiction. Explain why the ICJ has grounds to rule on the case. (Is it related to an international treaty or agreement? Which one?)
- Facts and Grounds. Provide a brief explanation of the facts and legal basis for the claim.

Once the ICJ has received a Written Application, it will then determine whether or not it has standing to make a ruling. If the ICJ decides to take your case, both parties to the dispute will be invited to the ICJ to make arguments in favor of their position. The ICJ will then make a ruling and write a decision on your case. Participants are bound by the ICJ's rulings once they have been made.

Please note that CIMUN gives special Advocacy awards for delegates who argue cases before the ICJ.

Head Delegates

At CIMUN XXIII, each country's delegation will have one position assigned as that country's Head Delegate to represent the country should their presence be requested in a committee that they are not in. For example, if your school is representing Denmark and Mexico, each country will have one position identified as its head delegate. For Denmark, the head delegate will be the delegate to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and for Mexico, they will be the delegate to the Organization of American States. If the UN Security Council requests the presence of Denmark, we will coordinate with our staff to notify the Denmark Head Delegate that their presence was requested and they will be directed to the appropriate community.

The exception to this rule are the countries that have a cabinet represented at CIMUN XXIII. This year, the United States, Soviet Union, United Kingdom, East Germany, West Germany, Poland, China, and Iran all will have their cabinets represented. If you have one of these countries, your school will be given the Foreign Affairs Minister or equivalent position in that country's cabinet, and they will serve as the Head Delegate for that country.



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Head Delegates serve as the on-the-ground managers of a country's policy. They should be thinking about developing a strategy across committees and stay informed on policy decisions in cabinets. Head Delegates should ensure that their country's policy remains consistent across committees. They are also tasked with assisting delegates in other committees to represent their national interests. As the expert on national policy, Head Delegates may receive directives from the Simulations team, which empower delegates to achieve a political victory.

For countries which do not have a national cabinet and with cases before the International Court of Justice (see the above section!), Head Delegates are also responsible for advocating for their country before the Court. Head Delegates may pass this responsibility to another delegate, but they must notify their faculty advisor and CIMUN XXIII staff prior to the conference. Please note those who advocate cases before the ICJ are eligible to win an additional award for ICJ Advocacy.

Here is the list of countries with pending cases before the ICJ, as well as the names of these cases:

- Aerial Incident of 3 July 1988
 - Islamic Republic of Iran v. United States of America
- Certain Phosphate Lands in Nauru
 - Nauru v. Australia
- Applicability of Article VI, Section 22, of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations
 - United Nations v. Romania

If you are the Head Delegate from one of these countries (or the Justice Minister or equivalent if the country has a national cabinet), you can prepare to be a strong advocate by reading the background guides for the ICJ and researching the cases on the docket. Please note that the CIMUN staff are aware you may need to spend significant time out of your committee, and will be factoring this into your awards evaluation accordingly.

Awards Criteria

CIMUN prides itself on an objective and balanced awards policy that stresses realistic portrayal of national interest and development of political skill. Committee awards consist of, in ascending order, Honorable Mention, Outstanding Delegate, and Best Delegate. Each committee will also vote on the recipient of a Delegates' Choice award.

The four key areas of evaluation are as follows:



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1. Accuracy of Policy – Dais staff will be monitoring political and representational accuracy of delegates. This includes rhetoric in speeches and documents, as well as in caucusing and bloc formation.
2. Rhetorical Skill – The ability of a delegation to relay the message of their country's policy in the correct terms, as well as the manipulation of dialogue to persuade other delegates toward their position.
3. Substantive Development – The ability of a delegation to develop substantive documents (e.g. working papers, resolutions, amendments) with the proper structure, grammar, skill, and context.
4. Procedural Manipulation – The ability to manipulate the rules of procedure and institutional legality to the advantage of your country and its policies.

Awards themselves are determined by a system of both subjective and objective measurements of these various attributes. Member States large and small, involved and distant, all have advantages in different areas of these criteria. Our staff is trained to evenly apply this policy. While those states involved directly in a topic may have an easier time articulating their policy, their policy tasks are much more difficult to achieve. For example, we do not expect North Korea to pass a resolution on nuclear weapons testing, as that would be impossible without many member states being out of character. By the same token, we do not expect strong rhetoric from Sweden, but rather a level of persuasiveness and conflict resolution.

In addition to committee work, CIMUN also awards delegates for excellence across the entire conference. These include the position paper awards, the cross-committee interaction award (also known as the Simulations award), as well as advocacy awards in the International Court of Justice for those who bring and argue cases before the ICJ.

How to Prepare for CIMUN XXII

Research

Research is the process of finding sources, establishing facts, and reaching a conclusion. A source is anything you use in research: websites, books, documents, interviews, etc. Sources range in quality. A “good” source is credible, meaning it comes from an organization or person with expert-level knowledge and an established reputation. A “bad” source is not credible, meaning it is biased or outright false.

The first step of your research is always to read the background guide thoroughly! These are carefully crafted by our staff to provide key knowledge on the issues, provide thematic and narrative framing for the conference, and narrow the topics so that delegates can research the correct information.



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Next, using the information and sources provided by your background guide, you'll want to do further research to develop a better understanding of your national policy and the details of the topics you'll be discussing. Here are the most important items to look into:

- *Topic Background.* Is there anything mentioned in the background guide you want to know about in more detail?
- *Past International Action.* Has the United Nations or any international bodies already taken action on this topic? Was it effective or ineffective? Why?
- *Country Profile.* Look into the country you'll be representing. Establish thorough knowledge of its geography, economy, culture, demographics, government – all the elements that define it.
- *Country Policy.* Use the country profile to start crafting an idea of what your country's policy on the topics is. Has your country issued any formal statements? How have they voted on past UN resolutions and treaties? Who are their allies and how would this impact what policies they would favor?
- *Possible Solutions.* Do some research on possible solutions that your country would support, and start outlining proposals you want to push for in your position paper and in committee.

Position Papers

Once you have read the background guide and done additional research, you are ready to write your position papers. You must submit one white paper per topic, and one black paper in total. White papers should be approximately one full page single-spaced, and black papers should also be approximately a full page single-spaced. Please cite all sources. Any standard citation format (MLA, APA, Chicago) is acceptable.

A *white paper* is an official statement of policy from a national government, similar to a national press release. It is intended to be a public statement, and will often include political rhetoric and posturing. A good white paper will attempt to "spin" your country's position on controversial topics to defray any criticism. You will be able to read the white papers of other delegates in your committee, and they will be able to read yours. White papers are similar to position papers you would write at other conferences. It should outline your country's public policies on the topic, and address how your country has dealt with, and will continue to deal with the topic in the future. In your white paper, you should focus on how your country would publicly discuss a particular issue. If your messaging does not match your true intentions, save those true intentions for your black paper.



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A *black paper* is a confidential, internal document that discusses a country's strategic interests for a particular topic, which may differ significantly from what your government discusses openly. Whereas the white paper is a public statement, the black paper can be compared to a confidential policy memo for your diplomatic corps. A good black paper will demonstrate a sound understanding of your country's internal motives behind a policy decision. Black papers will only be viewed by the CIMUN staff and will not be accessible by other delegates. A successful black paper should articulate a political victory for your country. You must ask yourself what constitutes a political victory.

For delegates in cabinets, white and black papers function slightly differently. Your white papers should be written as a memo to your head of government, and you should expect that your white paper will be available to other members of your cabinet. Your black paper can be thought of as the “redacted portion,” information which fits your political goals and what you envision as a political victory, but which may cover more clandestine elements of that strategy, and may even include details that you would not share with your Head of Government. For delegates in cabinets, black papers are your opportunity to signal your awareness and consideration of the elements of policy-making and strategizing which are not generally public, even within a country's government.

Rules of Procedure

The final step of preparing for conference is familiarizing yourself with CIMUN's Rules of Procedure. For ease of access, we've even included the relevant ones at the end of this background guide! No matter how experienced a delegate you are, CIMUN's ROP is slightly different from other conferences. ROP mastery can help you gain an edge in committee. The CIMUN Rules of Procedure are accessible at cimun.org.