



STUDY GUIDE

H-UNSC

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United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Study Guide

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Letter from Co-Secretaries-General

Esteemed delegates,

It is with great honor and gratitude that we welcome you all to the second edition of IHSANMUN. To us, this isn't just a conference; it's a community. A community of people who have seen hardship firsthand and emerged from it stronger. This conference impacts us deeply, as it is our opportunity to bring something that shaped us and built our character throughout the years to our own community at Ihsan. It is with great pleasure that we work tirelessly to bring this event to life, as it means educating fellow students about the issues in our world, helping them grasp things they may never learn in school, and developing skills they will need throughout their lives.

This year, our committees highlight a range of crucial topics in our world today. From JCC discussing the Castellammarese War, Marvel addressing the Sokovia Accords, and HUNSC debating the USA invasion of Iraq, to the Arab League focusing on foreign influence in the Arab world. Our committees also tackle pressing global concerns through SPECPOL regulating private military companies and mercenaries, UN Women preventing human trafficking, the World Bank mitigating aid dependency, and DISEC addressing the use of chemical weapons and working toward their elimination.

The world today is riddled with injustice and malice, and the degree of your subjection to such injustice is simply a matter of geographical luck. There is virtually nothing standing in the way of you continuing your everyday life or being forced to flee it in a matter of seconds.

What matters most is that we, as the international community, recognize our privilege and advocate for those who lack it. From this conference, learn that there is power in diplomatic dialogue. There is power in advocacy. **There is power in you.** We want you to take this opportunity to bring change and impact the world in your own way. The world is ours to live in and shape.

Let us all use that power to balance the scales once again, just as we've done before: only now, on a much bigger and far more impactful scale.

In pursuit of balancing the scales, Nada Alghory & Maizah Hassan
IHSANMUN'26 Secretaries-General



2. Letter From The Under Secretary General

Dear Delegates,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Security Council at IHSANMUN'26. I am honored to serve as your Under-Secretary General, and I am looking forward to what I am confident will be a high-level and engaging committee.

This study guide serves as your primary source of information for this committee. It covers everything you need from the 1991 Gulf War to the recent presentation by Secretary Colin Powell. While country positions are mentioned in the study guide, it is recommended that you research more about your countries and dive into the history of their relationships with Iraq and other nations involved in this agenda, as these regional dynamics are crucial to understanding the stability of the entire area. I also want to clarify that the references to "Tom and Jerry", "Ed, Edd, and Eddy", and calling Osama Bin Laden "The Goat" are pieces of sarcasm and humor. They are not meant to be taken seriously or used in debate.

You have the power to rewrite history in this committee. Please unleash your imagination and do your research. If you need any help, please feel free to reach out.

See you in the committee!

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3. Introduction to the Committee

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN) and holds the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Established in 1945 following the devastation of World War II, the Council was designed to foster collective security and prevent future conflicts by providing a platform for diplomacy and decisive action. Operating under the framework of the UN Charter, it is one of the most powerful and influential organs within the international system.

The UNSC is unique in its ability to make legally binding decisions that all UN member states are obligated to implement, setting it apart from other UN organs. It is authorized to take a range of measures to address threats to peace, including imposing economic sanctions, approving military interventions, and deploying peacekeeping forces to conflict zones. Its resolutions and mandates are central to international efforts in conflict resolution, crisis management, and the enforcement of international law.

The member states in the council are divided into two categories;

Five permanent members (P5): China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These nations wield the influential power of veto, allowing any one of them to block substantive resolutions regardless of majority support.

3. Introduction to the Committee

Non-permanent members, elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms, with seats distributed to ensure geographic representation across different regions of the world.

The UNSC's agenda is extensive and addresses some of the most pressing global challenges, including armed conflicts, nuclear non-proliferation, counter-terrorism, and the protection of civilians in war zones. It also plays a significant role in overseeing the implementation of peace agreements and supporting the establishment of post-conflict stability and governance.



The situation in Iraq has reached a critical point that threatens the basic principles of international law and the structural integrity of the United Nations. As of early 2003, the Security Council finds itself at a split between the necessity of disarmament and the preservation of state sovereignty.

4.1: Current Crisis

The current crisis centers on whether the Republic of Iraq has followed its orders to fully destroy its chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons programs. These orders were set after the 1991 Gulf War. Even though UN and IAEA inspectors are currently on the ground, the United States and the United Kingdom argue that Iraq is still hiding weapons and breaking UN rules.

From then on, the tension developed into two main ways:

1. **The Interventionist View:** This view claims that the time for talk has run out. They believe military force is the only way to make sure Iraq disarms and keep the world safe.
2. **The Diplomatic View:** This view argues that inspections are working and need more time. They believe an invasion without the UN's approval would be illegal and would damage the authority of the Security Council.

4.2: The Freeze Date

Freeze Date: February 5, 2003

Latest Event: Secretary of State Colin Powell has just concluded his presentation to the UN Security Council.

Keep in mind: Delegates are strictly prohibited from using information that came to light after this date. You cannot verify if accusations are false or if threats are baseless using future history. In this committee, the intelligence provided on February 5 is “live” and must be debated as such. While you may use future events as a reference for what could happen, we urge you to be original. You are not here to repeat history, you are here to rewrite it.

5. Historical Context

To understand the 2003 crisis, we must first look back at the events that defined Iraq's relationship with the international community over the previous years.

5.1: The Gulf War

The war began on August 2, 1990, when Iraqi forces, under Saddam Hussein, invaded and took over the state of Kuwait. This act was immediately condemned by the UN Security Council, leading to the formation of a massive international coalition led by the United States.

Operation Desert Storm: In January 1991, the coalition launched a military campaign to liberate Kuwait. The war was short but decisive, resulting in the retreat of Iraqi forces by February 1991.

The Ceasefire Agreement: On April 3, 1991, the UNSC passed Resolution 687. This is the most important document in this committee, as it sets the terms for the end of the war. In that resolution, there were two main terms:

1. **Disarmament:** Iraq was required to unconditionally accept destroying, removing, or handing over all chemical and biological weapons, as well as ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150km.
2. **Inspections:** Iraq had to agree to urgent, on-site inspections by the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the IAEA to verify that these weapons were gone.

The 1991 Gulf War did not result in regime change. Saddam Hussein remained in power, but Iraq was placed under a strict containment policy. This created years of Tom and Jerry between Iraqi officials and the UN inspectors.

5.2: The Sanctions

Following the 1991 Gulf War, the UN maintained one of the strictest and most complex systems of economic and military sanctions in history. These sanctions were designed to force Iraq to comply with its disarmament obligations without the need for further military conflict.

- 1. Trade Embargo:** Under Resolution 661, almost all trade and financial resources were blocked from entering or leaving Iraq. The goal was to prevent the Iraqi government from obtaining the funds or technology needed to rebuild its military and Weapons of Mass Destruction programs (WMD).
- 2. The Oil for Food Program (OFFP):** By the mid 1990s, reports showed a massive humanitarian crisis in Iraq, with shortages of food and medicine. In 1995, the UN established the OFFP under resolution 986, which allows Iraq to sell a limited amount of oil to buy humanitarian supplies. Some argued that Saddam manipulated the program to smuggle oil and bribe international officials, while the US and UK claimed he was using the money to build presidential palaces instead of feeding his people.
- 3. Containment and No-Fly Zones:** Throughout the 1990s, the US, UK, and France enforced no-fly zones in northern and southern Iraq to protect Kurdish and Shia populations from Iraqi air attacks. This led to frequent clashes between Iraqi anti-air groups and Western fighter jets.

Tom and Jerry: The 1990s were defined by a cycle: the UN would demand inspections, Iraq would block them, the US would threaten to bomb, Iraq would let them back in, and the cycle would repeat. In 1998, Iraq expelled the inspectors entirely, leading to Operation Desert Fox, a four-day bombing campaign by the US and the UK.

5.3: Post 9/11 Security Shifts

The global political landscape underwent a shocking shift following the terrorist attacks by Osama Bin Laden (The Goat) on September 11, 2001. While the initial international focus was on Al-Qaeda network in Afghanistan, the United States government soon shifted its attention towards Iraq as the central front in the global war on terrorism.

The Axis of Evil: In January 2002, President George W. Bush in his State of the Union address, labeled Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as an “axis of evil”. He argued that these regimes were seeking weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and could potentially provide them to terrorist organizations.

The Shift in Doctrine: Before 9/11, the international community relied on Containment, which included sanctions and no-fly zones. After 9/11, the US introduced the “Bush Doctrine”, which prioritized “Pre-emption”. The argument that the US could not afford to wait for a “smoking gun” in the form of a “mushroom cloud”.

The Linking of Iraq to Terrorism: Throughout 2002, US officials suggested that there were high-level contacts between Saddam Hussein’s secular Ba’athist regime and Al-Qaeda.

By late 2002, the debate had moved from whether Iraq should be closely observed to how to remove the threat. This shift put pressure on the Security Council. The US made it clear that if the UN did not act to enforce its own resolutions regarding Iraq’s disarmament, the US would lead a “Coalition of the Willing” to do it without them.

5.4: Resolution 1441

By late 2002, the United States was openly preparing for military action. To avoid a unilateral war, the UNSC engaged in weeks of intense negotiations to produce a final diplomatic solution. The result was Resolution 1441, which passed unanimously on November 8, 2002.

The Resolution stated that Iraq was already in material breach of the past ceasefire terms but offered a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations. It also gave the UNMOVIC and the IAEA strengthened powers to go anywhere in Iraq, including Saddam's presidential palaces, without notice. This resolution warned that if Iraq failed to comply, it would face "serious consequences".

The UK and the USA argue that "serious consequences" is a legal code for military force. Since the council already declared Iraq in material breach, the US believes no further vote is needed to start a war if the inspectors are blocked. While France, Russia, and China argue that the resolution does not grant the green light for war. They insist that if Iraq fails to comply, the UNSC must meet again to decide exactly what the "serious consequences" should be.

5.5: The Powell Presentation

On this morning (of the committee time), U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell addressed the Security Council in a highly publicized session, presenting what the US claimed was undeniable proof that Iraq was systematically deceiving UN inspectors and maintaining active WMD programs.

Powell utilized declassified intelligence, including satellite imagery of suspected chemical bunkers and intercepted radio transmissions of Iraqi military officers “allegedly” discussing the concealment of prohibited items from UNMOVIC inspectors.

A central part of the presentation focused on diagrams of mobile biological weapons laboratories, trucks that the US claimed could produce deadly pathogens while constantly moving to avoid detection.

Powell argued that Iraq’s non-compliance was not a technicality but a policy of evasion that posed an immediate threat to global security. He finished by stating that the SC must not shrink from its responsibility to enforce its resolutions.

The Impact of the Presentation:

Powell’s presentation was designed to build a moral and political consensus for war. However, it had the opposite effect on some member states.

UN inspectors reported that they had not yet found the mobile labs described by Powell, leading to a debate over whose data was more accurate: the US CIA or the UN’s own inspectors on the ground.

Immediately after the presentation, France and Russia restated that the evidence presented was not sufficient to justify an immediate invasion and that inspections must continue.

6. Legal & Political Controversy

6.1: Justification for the Intervention

The primary legal justification provided by the US and the UK relies on the concept of “Cumulative Authority”. They argue that Iraq has been in material breach of the ceasefire terms since 1991.

The Bush Doctrine: As discussed in 5.3, this policy argues that in a time of terrorism and WMDs, nations do not have to wait to be attacked. If a threat is seen as “growing”, a state has the right to strike first.

Enforcement of UN Credibility: The Pro-Intervention side argues that if the UNSC passes resolutions but refuses to enforce them with force, the UN becomes a “useless debating society”, as quoted by dear President Bush. They claim that they are invading to save the UN’s reputation, not destroy it.

6.2: Legal Implications of Resolution 1441

The debate between member states in the UNSC was all over the specific phrasing of Resolution 1441.

Immediate Action: The US argues for the idea that because 1441 declared Iraq in breach and warned of “serious consequences”, no further vote is needed. The war is already legally authorized by the existing text.

The Second Resolution Requirement: France, Russia, and China argue that “serious consequences” is a warning, not a deployment order. They maintain that the Council must meet again to confirm that Iraq has failed and to pass a second resolution specifically authorizing military action. Without the second resolution, they consider any invasion a violation of the UN Charter.

6. Legal & Political Controversy

6.3: Violation of State Sovereignty

The main anti-intervention argument is the principle of state sovereignty, as protected by Article 2 of the UN Charter.

Regime Change vs. Disarmament: Some members argue that the UN charter allows for disarmament, but it does not allow for regime change. They claim that the US's goal is to overthrow Saddam and install a pro-Western government, which they view as an illegal act of aggression against a sovereign UN member state.

Blueprint for Chaos: Many E10 members fear that if the US is allowed to invade Iraq based on sensing threats rather than an actual attack, any powerful country could use the same excuse to invade a smaller neighbor in the future. They argue that this would lead to global instability and a return to the law of the jungle.

7. Country Positions

7.1: The P5

The United States: They are the lead interventionist. They use the Bush Doctrine to argue that Iraq's WMDs are an immediate global threat.

The United Kingdom: They are the bridge between the US and the UN. They support the war and want to prevent the US from acting alone.

France: They are the leader of the diplomatic opposition. They believe that the inspections are working and are prepared to use their VETO power to stop any move toward an invasion.

Russia: They are aligned with France. They have massive economic oil contracts in Iraq and fear that a US-led invasion will destroy their regional influence.

China: They are a quiet but firm opponent of the idea of regime change. They view any unilateral action as a violation of state sovereignty and a dangerous global precedent.

7. Country Positions

7.2 The E10

Germany: Despite being a NATO ally, it is strictly anti-war. They are working closely with France to prevent the war from happening.

Syria: The only Arab nation in the Council. They view the US as an imperialist threat and will fight any resolution that hurts an Arab neighbor.

Spain: Prime Minister Aznar is a close ally of Bush and wants Spain to be seen as a major world power by supporting the invasion.

Pakistan: They are a US ally in the War on Terror, but their public is 90% anti war.

Chile & Mexico: Both countries signed Free Trade Agreements with the US, and Washington is using that to extort their votes.

Angola, Cameroon, & Guinea: The Ed Edd & Eddy of this committee. They are massively aided by the US and France. Their votes will decide if the SC gets to 9 votes.

Bulgaria: They are pro-US. They want to join NATO and see supporting the Iraq Invasion as the fee to get US protection.

7. Country Positions

7.3: The Observers

Iraq: They view themselves as defenders of international law. Their stance is that the US intelligence is fabricated and designed to mask a colonial oil grab.

Turkey: They view themselves as geopolitical gatekeepers. They want billions in aid for military access but fear a domestic revolt since their public is anti-war.

Kuwait: They support the US. Due to the Gulf War, they view Saddam's removal as a national necessity.

Jordan: They view the war as a threat to the region. Mostly concerned by a potential refugee crisis and total regional instability.

Iran: They hate Saddam but fear a permanent US presence on their border. They want to exploit and expand their own influence in post-war Iraq.

India: They refuse to take sides between the US and the anti-war bloc. Their stance is that a war will disrupt global economies and cause chaos in oil prices.

Saudi Arabia: A close ally with the US and want Saddam removed, but they face massive anti-war pressure from the Arab world. They avoid letting the US use their lands to plan an attack.

Japan: Due to their peaceful constitution, they cannot provide troops for a war. They support the US politically.

Canada: They support disarming Iraq, but will not join a war without a second resolution.

Norway: They argue that going to War without UN approval sets a dangerous precedent for global peace.

Libya: They view the political invasion as an illegal western oil grab. They fully stand with

Iraq.



7. Country Positions

IMPORTANT: Do not let these summaries limit you.

While these positions show the reality of February 2003, they are guides, not rules. You are not here to repeat history, you are here to write a new one. You are the leader of your nation.

The SC is where anything can happen. If you find a smart reason to change your mind, leave an alliance, or suggest a new solution, **DO IT**. You have the power to make deals and hold the world's most powerful countries accountable. Speak up. Negotiate. Change the script.

8. Questions to be Addressed

1. Is the proof presented by the US enough to declare Iraq in breach of its duties, or does the UN need its own inspectors (IAEA/UNMOVIC) to confirm the findings first?
2. Does Resolution 1441 already give an automatic permission for war, or is a second Resolution required before anyone fires a shot?
3. How does the SC define “Serious Consequences”? Does it only mean war, or can it mean more sanctions and inspections?
4. Does the UN charter allow for “Regime Change” if a leader is seen as a threat, or is the independence of a member state (Iraq) absolute?
5. What specific deals or diplomatic alternatives can be proposed to prevent a country from acting alone without UN support?

9. Additional Resources and References

Resolution 1441: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/478123>

The UN Charter (Chapter VII): <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-7>

The Powell Presentation Transcript: <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>

UNSC Meeting 4701: <https://docs.un.org/en/S/PV.4701>

UNMOVIC reports on what the inspectors found on the ground: <https://unis.unvienna.org/unis/en/pressrels/2003/sc7777.html>

The End.