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BACKGROUND GUIDE UNGA-DISEC

AGENDA: Measures to be taken to prevent proxy wars in the middle east

11TH 12TH
APRIL 2020

Letter from the EXECUTIVE BOARD

Greetings Delegates!

It is an honor to welcome you to UFYLC MUN 2020. It is a matter of immense joy to be a part of this amazing conference and encourage you to partake in this milestone event in the history of Jaipur MUN Circuit.

Model UN Conferences help you realize that no one is too small to make a change and no voice can ever go unheard, as long it intends to construct a solution. In this edition, we will be discussing the middle east situation and proxy wars along with its various dimensions. However, the study guide is in no way exhaustive and is only to provide you with enough background information to establish a platform for you to begin your research. We would highly recommend that you do a good amount of research beyond what is covered in the study guide.

The delegates are expected to maintain high level of diplomatic courtesy, accurate awareness about one's foreign policy leading to productive discourse in most solemn demeanor. We aim to put you in comprehensive environment, allowing you to excel in your critical thinking, negotiation skills, lobbying capabilities and tactical vision.

Furthermore, please take in serious consideration the following points regarding the type of documents that you might want to produce in the committee so as to substantiate your stand.

- Valid and Binding:

1. All reports published by the United Nations and its agencies.
2. Reports by Governments and its agencies. (With respect to their country only.)
 - Valid but not binding, in the order of precedence:
 1. Reuters
 2. Al Jazeera
 3. Amnesty International
 4. Reports without borders
 - Not Valid but can be used for reference purposes:
 1. Any report published by a recognized news agency or NGO.
 - Not accepted under any condition:
 1. Wikipedia
 2. WikiLeaks
 3. Blog Articles
 4. The Background Guide itself

Please feel free to mail in case of any query.

Regards,

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COMMITTEE BACKGROUND

1. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

The UNGA is the main deliberative policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations (UN), comprising of all 193 Members of the UN. Additionally, non-Member States, non-governmental organizations, and intergovernmental organizations have received invitations to participate as observers in the sessions and work of the UNGA. It provides a unique forum for multilateral discussions on the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter of the UN. Mandate of the UNGA is outlined by Chapter IV (Titled ‘The General Assembly’) under the Charter of the UN.

Apart from the UNGA Plenary (which majorly decides the agendas for meetings and ratifies resolutions adopted in the other Committees) its work is distributed to its six main Committees, each examining different topics that affect the international community:

The First Committee examines topics pertaining to international security and peace; the Second Committee examines economic and financial topics; the Third Committee examines social, cultural, and humanitarian affairs; the Fourth Committee examines special political questions and decolonization, the Fifth Committee handles administrative and budgetary issues of the United Nations; and the Sixth Committee examines legal questions in the General Assembly.

In addition to the six Main Committees of the General Assembly, a number of Boards, Commissions, Committees, Councils, and Working Groups work to support the advancement of the General Assembly’s mandate.

2. First Committee on Disarmament and International Security (DISEC)

The First Committee is one of the six Main Committees of the UNGA. It deals with disarmament, global challenges and threats to peace that affect

the international community and seeks out solutions to the challenges in the international security regime.

It considers all disarmament and international security matters within the scope of the Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any other organ of the UN; the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments; promotion of cooperative arrangements and measures aimed at strengthening stability through lower levels of armaments.

Originally, this committee was known as the Political and Security Committee, but was rapidly overwhelmed by the range of issues that could be assigned to it. In time, it came to focus on nuclear and conventional disarmament. In addition to traditional disarmament topics, the committee also examines emerging non-traditional disarmament issues, such as preventing an arms race in space and telecommunications in terms of international security; the committee also discusses regional issues and the role of gender in disarmament.

The committee works in close cooperation with its subsidiary organs like the *United Nations Disarmament Commission*, international initiatives like the Geneva based *Conference on Disarmament* and administrative bodies like the *United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs* (UNODA) and *United Nations Regional Centers for Peace and Disarmament*.

3. Functions and Powers

Functions and Powers of the UNGA are outlined specifically within Article 10 – 18 under the Charter of the UN.

Under Article 10 the UNGA has the power to discuss any issue or matter within the scope of the Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present charter, except as provided under Article 12. It can also make recommendations to the Members of the UN or to the UN Security Council or to both. Hence resolutions adopted on issues

or matters making recommendations to the Member States by the UNGA are *not legally binding* under the International Law; however they have significantly helped in tackling global issues and affected lives of millions of people.

Under Article 11(2) the UNGA may discuss any issue on maintenance of international peace and security brought before it, except as provided in Article 12.

Under Article 12(1) when the UN Security Council is discussing and deliberating any dispute or situation as per its assigned function under the Charter, the UNGA cannot make recommendations on that dispute or situation unless the UN Security Council so requests

Under Article 13 the UNGA is tasked with initiating studies and making recommendations to promote international cooperation in the political field, encouraging the development of international law, promoting the implementation of cultural, social, and human rights, and promoting fundamental freedoms free from discrimination.

Under Article 15 the UNGA receives and considers reports issued by the other principal organs established under the Charter as well as reports issued by its own subsidiary organs and bodies.

Should the UN Security Council fail to address a breach of international peace and security due to deadlocks between its permanent five members, the UNGA can consider the matter immediately, laid out in Article 11, but further codified with the adoption of UNGA resolution 377(V) (1950) entitled "Uniting for Peace."

4. Voting

Each member of the UNGA is entitled to one vote as per Article 18(1) of the Charter. A simple majority, i.e. 50% +1 affirmative votes, decides the decisions on matters in the UNGA. However, as per Article 18(2) decisions on *important questions* shall be made by a two-thirds majority of the total number of affirmative votes. These questions or matters include recommendations with respect to international peace and security, the

election of non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, the admission of new members to the UN, suspension of rights and privileges of the members, expulsion of members etc. The decision to adopt an *important question* in itself requires a simple majority procedurally.

About The Agenda

PROXY WARS

Proxy wars are defined as conflicts in which a third party intervenes indirectly in order to influence the strategic outcome in favour of its preferred faction – remain a missing link in contemporary war and security studies. They are historically ubiquitous yet chronically under-analysed.

Proxy wars are the product of a relationship between a benefactor (like a sponsor or supporter), who is a state or non-state actor external to the dynamic of an existing conflict, and the chosen proxies who are the conduit for the benefactor's weapons, training and funding. In short, proxy wars are the logical replacement for states seeking to further their own strategic goals yet at the same time avoid engaging in direct, costly and bloody warfare.

Karl Deutsch, a political scientist defined proxy wars as an international conflict between two foreign powers, fought out on the soil of a third country; disguised as a conflict over an internal issue of that country; and using some of that country's manpower, resources and territory as a means for achieving preponderantly foreign goals and foreign strategies.

To understand let us assume two states, **State A** and **State B**. When State A employs or hires State B to conduct operations on its behalf can be considered an inception of proxy war. Proxies, of course, have their own agendas, which makes the management of the relationship between the benefactor and the proxy during conflict invariably tricky, especially as proxies begin to develop greater perceptions of power or lead to differing interpretations of strategic objective to the benefactor. Furthermore, it is a trend in developed states where it can politically and economically benefit them.

As the twenty first century unfolds, the willingness of citizens to voluntarily join ever-shrinking national armies is declining; the cost of cutting-edge military technology is rising. Main decisive factors of proxy war remain rise

in the importance of private military companies, increasing use of cyberspace as a platform from which to wage war indirectly and emergence of 'Vietnam Syndrome' (draining support for foreign wars).

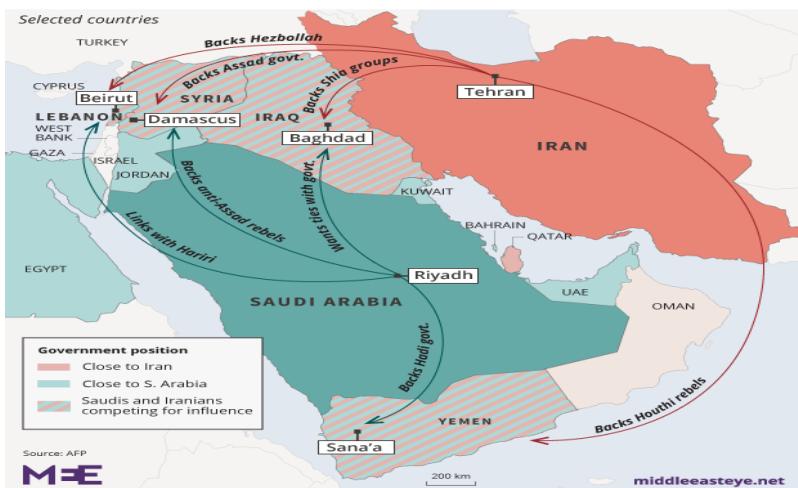
PROXY WARS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Proxy wars have always been a part of the Middle East regional landscape, but gained alarming prominence in the Middle East since 2011.

As states collapsed and civil wars overtook Yemen, Libya, and Syria, the U.S. worked with militias and other non-state actors who were positioned to serve as foot soldiers in the war against terrorism and, in some cases, hostile regimes. Small contingents of advisors and trainers sustained these relationships. Other regional actors adopted roughly similar approaches. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates—linked in alliance to the U.S., but with drastically different agendas—launched their own effort to recruit proxies.

Iran has worked to extend its influence by drawing on long-standing proxy relationships with Lebanese Hezbollah, Yemeni Houthis, and Iraq's Shi'i militias. Some proxy relationships derived from deep-seated ideological or ethnic fraternity, others from temporary alignment of interest. The result was an ever-shifting crosshatch of alliances and antagonisms spanning across the region and the globe.

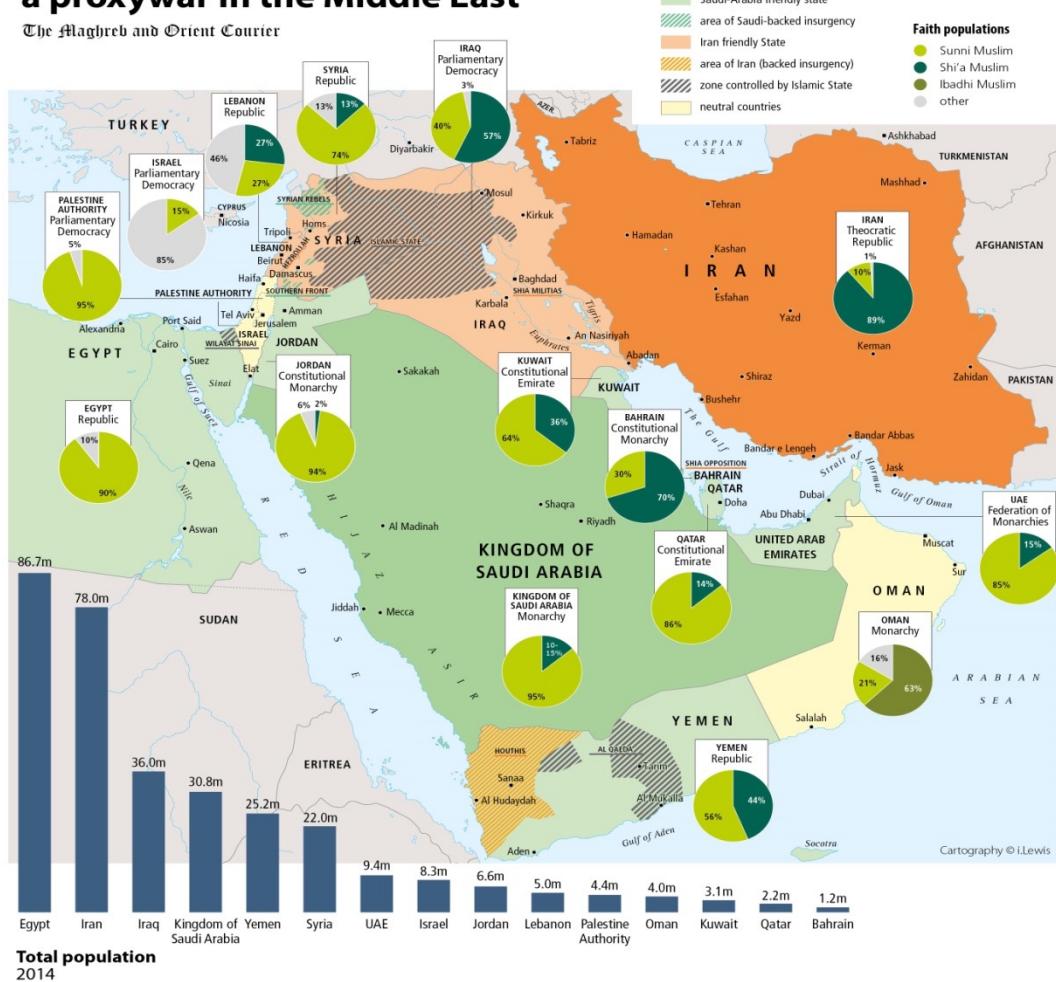
Saudi Arabia and Iran: Rivals in the Middle East



Proxy wars tend to be long and difficult to win—to the disappointment of policymakers expecting cheap and easy solutions to regional security challenges. Sponsors and proxies inevitably encounter **principal-agent** problems. Sponsors must be ruthless; the point is to get proxies to fight and die for the sponsor's objectives. Proxies, in turn, try to maneuver sponsors to assume greater risk and commit more resources while pursuing their own more parochial agendas.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia vs Islamic Republic of Iran : a proxywar in the Middle East

The Maghreb and Orient Courier



Many of the elements highlighted in the literature on proxy war are evident in the U.S. relationship with the Syrian opposition in general and with the Democratic Union Party (PYD), the leading Syrian Kurdish faction, in particular. The PYD had an ambiguous relationship with both the Bashar al-Assad regime and the organized opposition from the early years of the

Syrian civil war—the PYD criticized the Syrian National Council (SNC), the most significant early opposition organization, as being too close to Turkey, but also opposed other Kurdish groups and were accused of tacitly coordinating with the Assad regime. The U.S. and PYD allied primarily because they shared enemies. U.S. policymakers began to see the PYD as a reliable partner in the fight against ISIS, and as the other U.S.-backed Syrian

Democratic Forces (SDF), which promised both to defeat the Islamic State and serve as the vanguard of anti-Assad rebels. The PYD, in turn, used U.S. support to bolster its territorial ambitions.

Complex proxy wars such as Syria's defy common approaches for resolving civil wars. The challenge of making credible commitments, which scholars identify as the key to ending civil wars, affects domestic belligerents and their international patrons alike.

Conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, the Middle East, for the first time since the dawn of Islam, found itself without a regional hegemon. In the wake of this power vacuum, several nations emerged as potential successors, each struggling to exert dominance over its neighbors. One-by-one, however, suitors fell, as the Arab Spring wrought havoc throughout the world, sending once stable dynasties into anarchic chaos. Eventually, only two countries remained stable and powerful enough to stake a legitimate claim over the region: Saudi Arabia and Iran. Though the two rival countries sit across the Persian Gulf from each other, that is the end of the similarities. Saudi Arabia is Sunni Muslim, seeing itself as the overseers of traditional Islam and gatekeepers of its holy cities: Mecca and Medina. Iran, on the other hand, is a Shia-majority country, viewing the Sunnis as usurpers who have besmirched the faith and tarnished its teachings. Furthermore, the two countries represent vastly different ethnic groups. Saudi Arabia is, for the most part, ethnically homogenous, with Saudi Arabs making up nearly ninety percent of the entire population. Conversely, Iran is a melting pot of eastern/central Asian peoples, a lasting remnant of their ancient role as a crossroads between the Far East and Europe. These factors combined make the battle between Iran and Saudi more than a mere struggle for regional dominance. Instead, it represents an ancient conflict dating back thousands of years to the birth of civilization and modern religion.

Why the Middle East Is More Combustible Than Ever

The war that now looms largest is a war nobody apparently wants. During his presidential campaign, Donald Trump railed against the United States' entanglement in Middle Eastern wars, and since assuming office, he has not changed his tune. Iran has no interest in a wide-ranging conflict that it knows it could not win. Israel is satisfied with calibrated operations in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Gaza but fears a larger confrontation that could expose it to thousands of rockets. Saudi Arabia is determined to push back against Iran, but without confronting it militarily. Yet the conditions for an all-out war in the Middle East are riper than at any time in recent memory.

A conflict could break out in any one of a number of places for any one of a number of reasons. Consider the September 14 attack on Saudi oil facilities: it could theoretically have been perpetrated by the Houthis, a Yemeni rebel group, as part of their war with the kingdom; by Iran, as a response to debilitating U.S. sanctions; or by an Iranian-backed Shiite militia in Iraq. If Washington decided to take military action against Tehran, this could in turn prompt Iranian retaliation against the United States' Gulf allies, an attack by Hezbollah on Israel, or a Shiite militia operation against U.S. personnel in Iraq. Likewise, Israeli operations against Iranian allies anywhere in the Middle East could trigger a region wide chain reaction. Because any development anywhere in the region can have ripple effects everywhere, narrowly containing a crisis is fast becoming an exercise in futility.

Measures to attain peace in proxy wars

Peace in proxy wars must be approached through what scholars call "**nested security**" arrangements, reflecting grand regional bargains in which opposing sponsors take mutual steps to withdraw and de-escalate conflicts from the outside in. Syria, Libya, or Yemen are not separate wars, but theaters in a regional conflagration where the U.S., along with Russia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran, UAE, Turkey, and others, contend via domestic proxies and direct troop deployments.

Some traditional methods involve electoral engineering, power-sharing arrangements, or other peace deals that seek to satisfy the aspirations of involved internal parties, while ensuring that the peace deal is "self-enforcing." This means that it will hold up even in the absence of outside

pressure. In internationalized civil wars, however, conflict managers must also satisfy involved outside actors or otherwise neutralize external conflict processes.

There are multiple methods for doing this, ranging from effective border control in cases of conflict spillover to decomposing internationalized conflicts into civil and international conflicts, which are solved separately, to outright peace enforcement involving international security guarantees.

For a detailed list of UN practices, procedures and solutions pertaining to the issue, please read: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/reertoire/middle-east>

SCOPE FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is your country's stand in the crisis? What can be done to control the violence? Is a compromise possible? How to protect human rights while maintaining security?
2. What goals does your country have in the region, and how does this conflict potentially advance/hinder these aspirations?
3. With the end of the Proxy War and ISIL hopefully in sight, who will take control over these coveted possessions?
4. How is the best way to politically diffuse the situation between Saudi Arabia and Iran?
5. How else has this conflict affected the Middle East in terms of trade, oil and diplomatic relations? What is the relationship between this proxy war and Saudi Arabia cutting off diplomatic relations with Qatar?

There are many issues that must be addressed under the proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and different countries are addressing different issues. Do not limit your research only to the topics mentioned above; these will be the starting point of our discussion. It is important to research not only the topic but also your country. In this situation, it would be strange to see Sunni and Shiite countries working together without extenuating political circumstances. Multiple resolutions can be passed on this topic.

Links for Research :

1. UN Charter: <https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>
2. Proxy wars: Mumford, A., 2013. Proxy warfare and the future of conflict. *The RUSI Journal*, 158(2), pp.40-46.
3. Middle east proxy wars situation: <https://www.fpri.org/article/2019/10/how-the-united-states-can-escape-the-middle-easts-proxy-wars/>
4. Peace in proxy wars: Jenne, E., & Popovic, M. (2017, September 26). Managing Internationalized Civil Wars. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. Retrieved 1 Mar. 2020, from <https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-573>.

5. <https://www.newamerica.org/international-security/reports/twenty-first-century-proxy-warfare-confronting-strategic-innovation-multipolar-world/rethinking-proxy-warfare/>
6. Ellyatt, Holly. Saudi Arabia and Iran's feud has entered a new 'unpredictable' phase. CNBC, 21 Dec. 2017.
7. "Meet the Proxies: How Iran Spreads Its Empire through Terrorist Militias." The Tower, [www.thetower.org/article/meet-the-proxies-how-iran-spreads-its-empire-through-terrorist -militias/](http://www.thetower.org/article/meet-the-proxies-how-iran-spreads-its-empire-through-terrorist-militias/)