Boston College High School

Model UN Conference

XXXIII

March 1, 2025

Israel-Palestine Conflict: Crisis Committee

Chair: Chris Brazeau'25
Co-Chair: Christopher Brown'26

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Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

     My name is Chris Brazeau'25, a senior and Deputy Secretary General of this club here at Boston College High School. I am extremely excited and honored to be able to chair this committee this year as it is a very paramount topic currently and one of our first dual-delegate committees at this conference. Besides MUN, I started my own charity called the St. Peregrine Initiative where I run toy drives for children in hospitals battling pediatric cancer in the greater Boston area. In addition to these toy drives, the St. Peregrine Initiative has run bone marrow registry events so that children around New England can potentially be matched with a donor. Along with this activity I am involved in scientific research completing my own research project on circadian rhythms and participating in an internship at Massachusetts General Hospital studying Parkinson's Disease. Finally, I love track and field, participating as a high jumper and long jumper for BCH.

     I am very excited to chair this committee and observe how well you all debate, collaborate, and negotiate resolutions. Please treat everyone and this topic with extreme care and respect. As this will be a large and more difficult committee, I expect all delegates to be involved in debate, whether in big or small ways, as it will benefit you well. If this is your first ever conference, Welcome! I hope you have a great time, meet new people, and speak your beliefs. If it is your last, as it will be mine, I hope you reflect on your experiences with MUN and that you truly take advantage of the moment during this conference. Please email me any questions or concerns you have, and I will be taking position papers by email or physical copy by the start of the committee. I look forward to hearing from you all in committee!

Thank you,

Chris Brazeau '25 - Deputy Secretary General BC High Model UN XXXIII
cr.brazeau25@students.bchigh.edu

Letter from Co-Chair

Dear Delegates,

My name is Christopher Brown and I am a junior at Boston College High School as well as your co-chair. It is an honor and a privilege to be able to co-chair this committee with a topic as important as the conflict in the Middle East. Outside of Model UN, I am a member of the Boston College high school lacrosse team. Alongside this, I have founded a local organization which helps to facilitate and distribute lacrosse equipment to youth in Massachusetts. Outside of lacrosse, I am also a founding member and Vice President of the Boston College High School DECA chapter which has helped to expand and develop my passion for MUN.

I am extremely excited and interested in the debate and resolutions surrounding this topic. As this is a very nuanced and at times emotional debate, I request and urge everyone to have an increased focus on an outcome and positive solutions with an emphasis on respect and dignity for all delegates with that being said, I am looking forward to lively discussions and furthering all of our understandings on the conflict in the Middle East. Participation from all delegates is welcomed and encouraged, and if there's any way in which I can help facilitate this process, please do not hesitate to reach out. I cannot wait for our committee and look forward to meeting all of you.

Christopher Brown '26 - Co-chair
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Letter from the Crisis Director

Hello Delegates,

Welcome to BC High's 33rd Model UN Conference, my name is Will Garrett, and I am honored to call myself your crisis director. I would like to thank each and every one of you for expressing interest in our committee and your desire to work towards a resolution.

In the seventh grade, I attended my first Model UN meeting and immediately fell in love with it. For the past four years, I developed my relationship with the club, attending several conferences, and building a reputation for myself. Outside of Model UN, I am a member of our Youth and Government delegation, ESL tutor, and hair salon assistant. When I'm not at school or working, I enjoy painting, playing the piano, and gardening. Model Un has been an opportunity to connect with similar people, and where I have made some of my best friends. I am proud to be able to provide a conducive environment for your learning and collaboration, and I am excited to see what changes you will make.

As the events of this committee are deeply connected to active conflicts, some aspects of this background guide may be outdated by the time of the conference! Please be prepared for a relevant debate, and actively research the topic. I look forward to seeing you all in March!

Best,
Will Garrett
wf.garrett27@students.bchigh.edu

Introduction

        The Israel-Palestine conflict is one of the most complex issues in modern history. It is a conflict that has been going on for over a century, involving historical, political, religious, and territorial disputes. While the conflict involves Israel and the Palestinian people, it has broader problems as well. This dispute has attracted the involvement of regional countries in the Middle East and international powers such as the United Nations, United States, and European Union.

        Delegates in this committee will represent key positions in the Israel-Palestine conflict, including Israel, Palestine, neighboring Arab states, and other global powers. Through debate and collaboration, delegates will work towards solutions that address critical issues such as borders, the status of Jerusalem, security, refugees, and the establishment of peace.

        The conflict's origins go back to the early 20th century, with competing Jewish and Arab nationalist movements. Key events, such as the 1947 UN Partition Plan, the 1967 Six-Day War, and various peace efforts like the Oslo Accords and Camp David Summit, have formed the tension. Despite these peace attempts, a lasting resolution is still very much in need. Delegates must address both the historical issues and current affairs of the conflict.

        The goal of this committee is to see how these two countries and the international community can facilitate peace and navigate the barriers to achieving a two-state solution. In addition to this, delegates must navigate around abrupt real-time crises that will happen frequently throughout the committee. Finally, delegates must act appropriately and not participate in any racial, homophobic, sexist, xenophobia, or religious discrimination at any time in or out of the committee.

Background

      The origins of the Israel-Palestine conflict can be traced back to the early 20th century, when competing nationalist movements started to form in the region. Before the establishment of Israel (Pre 1948), the land of historic Palestine was under British rule as a result of the **1917 Balfour Declaration**, which promised to establish a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, which had a large Arab population. Tensions between the Jewish and Arab populations grew as Jewish immigration to the area increased, driven by the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe. After the creation of Israel in 1948 and the **First Arab-Israeli War**, Israel declared its independence, prompting an immediate military response from neighboring Arab states, including Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. This conflict (The 1948 Arab-Israeli War) led to Israel's victory, but also resulted in the displacement of around 750,000 Palestinian Arabs, creating a refugee crisis that remains a central issue of the conflict today. After the war, Egypt controlled the Gaza Strip, and Jordan took control of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

A key moment in the conflict occurred in 1967, when Israel fought against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in the Six-Day War. Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. This war altered these states, now leading with Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories today. In addition to this, the **UN Security Council Resolution 242** requested for Israel to withdraw from territories occupied in 1967 in exchange for peace agreements, but this was never fully implemented. Other peace efforts such as the **Oslo Accords (1993)** and the **Camp David Summit (2000)**, looked to resolve the conflict, but have failed to make a lasting solution.

United States president Bill Clinton, Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority chairman Yasser Arafat at Camp David Summit.
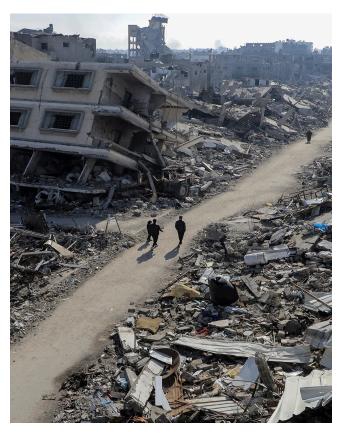
Key Issues

The conflict continues to be driven by a number of long lasting controversial issues, which have yet to be resolved. Some of the most critical debates include the status of Jerusalem, borders, refugees, and the two state solution. First, with the debate over the status of Jerusalem, both Israelis and Palestinians claim Jerusalem as their capital. Israel controls the city, but Palestinians view East Jerusalem, which was captured by Israel military in 1967, as the capital of their Palestinian state. The status of Jerusalem remains one of the most politically sensitive issues in the conflict, and needs to be addressed.

In addition to Jerusalem, the question surrounding the borders of Israel and a Palestinian state is still unresolved. Israel controls the West Bank, and the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank has further complicated any potential solution. The Gaza strip is also a centerpiece of this debate as the Hamas de facto governing body has control, but Israeli forces are applying pressure through recent attacks. The establishment of mutually agreed-upon borders remains a central point in peace talks.

Source: UN Ocha, 2023

The issue of Palestinian refugees and their descendants, displaced during the 1948 war, still remains unresolved. This has destroyed families and led to an overflow of immigrants into European countries and neighboring Middle Eastern nations such as Jordan. Palestinians demand the right of return to their former homes, while Israel fears that granting this right would result in a demographic shift that undermines their Jewish state. In addition to these worries, Israel's

security concerns are prominent, particularly given the history and recent events of violence and terrorism, including attacks by groups like Hamas in Gaza. On the other hand, Palestinians face restrictions imposed by Israel, as well as the presence of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Palestinians also are in fear from ongoing attacks made by Israeli forces on the Gaza strip which has killed thousands.

The idea of a two-state solution, where Israel and a future Palestinian state coexist side by side, has been the cornerstone of most peace proposals. However, achieving this solution is difficult due to the competing territorial claims, political fragmentation within the Palestinian territories, and the continued expansion of Israeli settlements. As this would prove to be a significant solution, currently it does not seem viable.

Questions to Consider

1. How can we address the immediate humanitarian needs in Gaza?

2. How can we resolve key issues like territory, Jerusalem, and security, without interfering with culture and religious practices?

3. How can regional powers and international powers come to a ceasefire not just in the short-run, but long term as well?

4. What role should international legal bodies play in addressing war crimes?

Positions

1. Argentina

2. Australia

3. Brazil

4. Canada

5. China

6. Egypt

7. France

8. Germany

9. Iran

10. Indonesia

11. Israel (Israeli Government)

12. Jordan

13. Lebanon

14. Malaysia

15. Norway

16. Palestine (Palestinian Authority)

17. Qatar

18. Russia

19. Saudi Arabia

20. South Africa

21. Sweden

22. Switzerland

23. Turkey

24. United Arab Emirates

25. United Kingdom

26. United States of America

27. United Nations (UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process)

28. Vatican City

29. Vietnam

30. Zimbabwe

CRISIS GUIDE

By KinJia Wong & William Yang Goodwin

A General Guide to Model UN Crisis Committees

Model UN Crisis Committees differ from traditional General Assembly (GA) simulations by introducing fast-paced, dynamic scenarios requiring quick thinking, diplomacy, and most importantly, adaptability. This guide provides an overview of how to approach crisis committees, including a run-down of the structure, along with some strategies and skills needed to succeed.

What is a Crisis Committee?

A Crisis Committee simulates a high-stakes political, economic, or military situation where delegates represent specific characters or countries, often within smaller groups. These crises evolve rapidly, with new events, problems, or developments being introduced in real-time, which require immediate action. Unlike GA sessions, where discussions are slow-paced and consensus-based, crisis committees focus on quick, decisive moves and seizing the initiative.

Key Elements of a Crisis Committee

- The Crisis Itself: A real or fictional scenario (e.g., a war, political upheaval, or natural disaster) that forms the central problem to resolve. Unlike a GA, each delegate has powers of their own, called "Personal Powers" or "Portfolio Powers."

- Committee Structure: Smaller groups with 10-20 delegates, each representing a unique position. This can be a country, or in our committee, a single person.

- Crisis Updates: Frequent updates from the backroom (people running the crisis behind the scenes) that alter the scenario. These could be unexpected events designed to throw you off, but most of the time they will be updating you on the happenings of the other committees.

- Directives: Delegates submit "directives," which are formal written instructions to handle the crisis. These directives can be individual or collective and can cover diplomatic, military, economic, or political actions. Directives will be covered in more depth later.

- Personal Crisis Arcs: Individual characters may have personal goals or ambitions that affect their actions and influence how they interact with the crisis.

THE STRUCTURE OF A CRISIS COMMITTEE

Overview

The procedure in crisis committees varies from other types of committees you may be used to. There are some key differences in the committee, which will go through different crisis steps in debate. It is important to note that this is only an overview with general guidelines and that chairs/co-chairs have the right to make any procedural changes they see fit during the committee.

General Debate

I. Debate will always open with a roll call; to which all delegates respond "present" or "present and voting".

II. Crisis committees are generally less uniform in debate, with NO motions for speaker's lists.

III. Rather, the primary forms of debate in crisis committees are round robins, moderated caucuses, and unmoderated caucuses.

IV. Due to the nature of a smaller-sized committee, delegates can offer a point of inquiry, without permission from the chair, as long as someone else is not speaking.

V. Speeches are usually much briefer (20-30s), so it is not recommended to yield your time to other delegates.

Moderated/Unmoderated Caucuses

VI. Moderated caucuses are formal debates, and the chair will individually recognize delegates to speak by raising their placard.
  A. When motioning for an Unmoderated Caucus, you must clarify the topic, total time, and speaking time.
  B. If there are not enough speakers, delegates can speak multiple times in a single moderated caucus.
  C. If there are no other points or motions, the debate defaults to a moderated caucus of the chair's discretion.
  D. Example: "Motion for a 5 minute moderated caucus with a 30 second speaking time on __XYZ__" (Colloquially, a "five-thirty.)

VII. Unmoderated caucuses.
  A. Traditionally the total time of Unmoderated Caucuses ranges from 5-10 minutes at a time.
  B. Crisis Committees have less unmoderated caucuses than General Assemblies.
  C. During the time allotted during an Unmoderated Caucus, delegates are allowed to freely walk around and collaborate with other people.
  D. Unmoderated Caucuses are normally used to write, and merge directives.
  E. Example: "Motion for a 10 minute Unmoderated Caucus"

Round Robins

VIII. Round Robins are typically used as an alternative to the speakers list.

IX. In a round robin, every delegate has the chance to speak, and the order is determined by where you are sitting around the room.

X. Speaking times are generally limited to 30 seconds or less.

XI. Round robins can be found most useful after a major crisis event/update, in which they will often be looked upon favorably by chairs.

XII. Example: "Motion for a 30 second round robin".

Directives:
Committee Directives: Submitted on behalf of the entire committee and requires collaboration from multiple roles. They can range from military actions to diplomatic solutions. **In a BCHMUNC XXXIII crisis committee, a Directive requires a minimum of 3 sponsors and a maximum of 5.** The other specifics are left to individual Chairs' discretion. The Portfolio Powers of a directive's Sponsors will be considered regarding the directive's execution, but Directives differ from Personal Directives in the fact that a Directive alone may carry the weight of the <u>committee</u>, or in our case, the resources and **will of the Emperor**.

Personal Directives: Submitted individually by delegates, these are often actions like espionage, moving troops, etc., but can be anything possible per your portfolio powers. Best used to progress your own goals—known as your "crisis arc". Examples of effective Personal Directives and common mistakes delegates often make are listed below, in the **Writing Effective Notes** subsection.

Joint Personal Directives: The bread and butter of experienced crisis delegates, a Joint Personal Directive (JPD) is a way to write a Directive without needing it to be brought to a full committee vote. This is best used when two or more delegates need to combine their personal powers to achieve something, ie. a joint military maneuver, outfitting an army with new gear, or taking out an opponent with one-two combo in one fell swoop.

Press Releases: Public announcements that can be used to influence other delegates or the direction of the crisis. In our JCC, this can be an important way to communicate with the opposition, as **Press Releases are broadcasted to the other committee(s) and to the general public.**

Key Skills for Success
In general, strategies good for a GA are good for a crisis committee. But the next few are especially important.

- Adaptability: Unlike traditional MUN, crisis committees shift rapidly. You need to be flexible and able to adjust your strategies as new information is revealed.

- Creativity: Think outside the box. We reward bold, innovative actions.

- Diplomacy: Even though crises are fast-paced, diplomacy is still at the heart of every MUN committee. Make alliances, maintain relationships, and know when to compromise.

- Management: handle pressure well, and be able to make quick decisions that balance both your personal arc and the greater needs of the committee.

WRITING EFFECTIVE DIRECTIVES

Be Specific: Clearly outline the goal of the directive, the steps necessary to achieve it, what personal powers are contributing, and your best-case ultimate end goal of the directive.

Coordinate with Allies: When submitting directives, the more people the better. Working closely with other delegates to ensure your directive gains the necessary support.

Anticipate Countermoves: Be strategic by thinking ahead. How might the opposition respond to your directive? Consider crafting backup plans in case your initial strategy fails, and outline those in your directive as well.

Keep Things Close: **Your personal powers should be some of your closely guarded secrets.** It can make for a powerful negotiating point if they are revealed, but doing so could allow someone else to know your weakness and begin to tear down your arc.

Writing Crisis Notes

Notes are the main component which separate traditional committees from those with crisis elements. You receive one or two notepads at the start of the day, in which you write plans, actions, questions, plots, etc. Think of this as writing to your private secretary who is able to act on your behalf outside the committee.

The dais will periodically collect these notepads and forward them to the backroom to respond to your note. If you use your notes effectively, you'll be able to promote your private interests, build alliances, use or even expand your portfolio powers, and obtain new resources for the committee.

Ultimately, notes build your importance and power in committee. With a series of well written notes, you can take the spotlight of the committee. The next "crisis break" can be about you and your plans, which is a good goal to have. When your notes are causing crisis breaks, you become more influential in the decisions of the committee.

Remember the following when writing notes:

The Three Rs: Resource, Request, Reason.

(credit: University of Chicago, https://munuc.org)

I.   **Resource**: All you need to do is state a reminder of what you already have. While this does not need to cover everything, it should be relevant to the next part of the note.
   A.   "I would like to access my granaries and *tael* reserves in Chengdu."

II. **Request**: Keep requests small for the most part, these are more likely to be granted. Ask for anything which is an extension of your current resources. In addition, notes should **not** be addressed to the crisis staff. They instead should be addressed as a letter might: to a character, such as a secretary, servant, or general, within the simulation setting.
   A.   "Recruiters should be hired with the silver, and they should attempt to rally two armies of spearmen."

III. **Reason**: This final part is the most important in your note. It provides a justification for your request and gives the dais more insight into your ultimate strategy.

A. "One army of spearmen will rendezvous with Ma Teng, the Unyielding Tiger of Liang, at our border with the Wei, and join his armies there. The other army will be left in reserve in Chengdu, defending the city and training the skills."

Example Note A
It hits all of the points above!

> Dear Secretary Ming,
>
> I would like to access my granaries and *tael* reserves in Chengdu. Recruiters should be hired with the silver, and they should attempt to rally two armies of spearmen. One army of spearmen will rendezvous with Ma Teng, the Unyielding Tiger of Liang, at our border with the Wei, and join his armies there. The other army will be left in reserve in Chengdu, defending the city and training their skills.
>
> General Yao, (any other parties involved)

How the Backroom Might Reply
Not only did the request get approved, you even received an additional option to strengthen your soldiers.

> The recruiters were hired using two units of our *tael*, leaving seven in the treasury. The soldiers were received by the Unyielding Tiger at the border, and the other army is training outside of our capital, Chengdu.
>
> The commander of the army commented to the messenger that his novice recruits are having trouble with poor weaponry and armor—and is requesting the lord three *tael* to outfit his men. If you do so, their power will surely increase!

Example Note B
It is missing all the above!

> To Crisis,
>
> I would want to attack the border of Wei quickly and swiftly, and please execute our emperor to put myself on the throne.

How the Backroom Might Reply
The request went through. but you got severely punished for the lack of specifics and reason for your actions.

You have sent three armies of trainee infantry on an expedition to the Wei border. Your men ran into armies led by your ally Ma Teng, the Unyielding Tiger of Liang, but began fighting them, confusing them with the enemy. One army was obliterated by the general's defending forces, while the other two, fleeing, suffered heavy losses due to illness and hunger.

You hired an assassin off the farmer's market, promising him one *tael* upon completion of the task. The attempt on the emperor's life went unnoticed, as his attempt to poison the emperor with extra salted pickles left him uncomfortable—but not dead.

Tips, and Common Pitfalls to Avoid

Tunnel Vision: Don't become so focused on your personal arc that you ignore the broader crisis. You need to keep one eye on the larger committee while advancing your individual plans.

Overcomplicating Directives: While creativity is important, overly complex directives can slow down the committee or confuse the crisis staff. Keep your ideas clear and actionable.

Acting Too Quickly: While crisis committees reward fast action, acting too quickly and rashly can lead to poor outcomes. Take time to assess the situation before acting: slow is steady, and steady is fast.

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