



# SPECPOL

## Agenda Item:

Recent Nation Divisions in  
the Middle East

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## **1. Letter from the Secretary-General**

Esteemed Participants,

It is our paramount pleasure to welcome you to the second installment of Yükseliş Model United Nations Conference 2025. We, Neva Nas Aydın and Ramazan Yandı, will be serving you as your Secretary General's in the upcoming three days. Our Executive Team has put not only the best Academic Team but the Best Organization team so that you can enjoy creating memories in our conference.

Essentially Model United Nations Conferences are great opportunities to improve your debating capabilities, your confidence, your foreign language level and understand how policy is implemented. We can state that Model United Nations Conferences helped us both in our academic and social lives. For this reason it is our duty to transfer these experiences to the next generations and ensure that they affect them in a similar way.

We hope you have one of the best MUN experiences of your lives in YKMUN 2025!

Sincerely,

Neva Nas Aydın & Ramazan Yandı

## **2. Letter from the Under Secretary-General**

Esteemed Participants of the SPECPOL Committee,

I am Yağız Gül, a high school graduate, and I will be serving as your Under-Secretary General through the second annual session of YKMUN'25 alongside my honourable Academic Assistant Doruk Şentürk. I am glad to welcome you all!

Since the French Revolution, 1789, nationalist movements have always been on the rise. Even in the 21st century, this did not change. This agenda item explores the harsh and complex political dynamics in the Middle East which have been caused by aforementioned movements. SPECPOL, The Fourth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly mainly focuses on such topics related to decolonization issues and special political missions, which the agenda item of the committee perfectly fits within this description.

I am sure that YKMUN'25 will be an unforgettable experience for all of us. I would like to thank the Secretariat of this wonderful conference, especially Secretary-General Ramazan Yandı for the invitation that enabled me to be a part of this atmosphere.

I may not be attending the conference full-time because of my personal matters but I have no doubt that my esteemed Academic Assistant Doruk Şentürk and the academic staff of the committee will succeed to lead you to delightful academic experience even in my absence.

I hope all of you will be attending the committee fully prepared. Please do not hesitate to contact me even for a second if you have any questions on your mind regarding the committee. I look forward to meeting you there

Best wishes,

Yağız GÜL

Under-Secretary General

### **3. Letter from the Academic Assistant**

Dear delegates, distinguished academic team and fellow participants;

I am honoured to welcome you all to the second annual of YKMUN'25 conference. It's a pleasure to serve you as an academic assistant of the SPECPOL committee. My name is Doruk Şentürk and I am a 12th grade student in Antalya Maya Science and Technology High School.

I'm highly believing that this guide, as it states, will help your committee roles and processes well-enough. Our general expectation for you is to study this guide sufficiently and join the committee with your knowledge of the country's procedure and function which you will be represented as.

Lastly I want to thank the executive team for giving me an opportunity to serve as academic assistant in this delightful conference and my Under Secretary-General Yağız for his offer about making this high-brand committee and agenda. I cannot wait to meet all of you personally and I hope you can have a great time with the time you spend in the conference. You can contact me at any kind of situation or problem, do not hesitate to ask me any questions about the committee. See you soon!

Sincerely,

Doruk ŞENTÜRK

Academic Assistant

## **4. Introduction**

### **4.1 Introduction to SPECPOL**

Special Political and Colonization Committee (SPECPOL) is the 4th committee of the General Assembly. It was created in 1993 with the purpose of handling problems which Disarmament and International Security (DISEC) fails to handle. Considers a broad range of issues covering a cluster of five decolonization-related agenda items, the effects of atomic radiation, questions relating to information, a comprehensive review of the question of peacekeeping operations as well as a review of special political missions, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Israeli Practices and settlement activities affecting the rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the occupied territories, and international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

### **4.2 Brief Historical Background**

The Middle East has always been one of the best places to live and settle down for people thanks to the region's geographical advantages. Thousands of years ago when humans were hunter-gatherers, they were living in circular small settlements in the Mesopotamia region. As humans started to reproduce more they needed larger places to live so they started to spread throughout the region. Not so long after, they stopped the hunter-gatherer lifestyle and created farmer colonies. They realized that the Euphrates and Tigris rivers were the greatest rivers in the Middle East so they built cities and plantations around them.

Even though those rivers were the heart of the region, they also caused numerous wars between tribes and states and resulted in thousands of deaths and destruction of antique goods.

With the Assyrians conquering Northern Arabian Peninsula and Eastern Egypt, they acquired a great knowledge on farming tools besides cultures of different tribes. This allowed those cultures and living styles to somewhat unify for the first time under the same ruler.

It is possible to say that The Middle East is a region that has hosted many wars throughout history. This led to cultures and religions in the Middle East to look alike.

### **4.3 Introduction to the Agenda Item**

It is possible to see countless wars happening in the Middle East right now. Main reasons for many of those wars are either Arab nationalism or reserves of natural resources. Many countries put in defensive policies to withstand those wars but they seem to fail one by one by going into internal or international conflicts. In the following paragraphs more detail will be processed.

Tens of thousands of people died and millions were injured or displaced in wars in the Middle East. Many new states were founded in the process. Major powers have strong influence in the region which lead to citizens of some countries not being able to choose leaders of their countries. Wars usually jump from a state to another state and. This results in more collateral damage.

Even though this has been the case it is not impossible to find solutions and limit the effects of wars and help millions in need to have a better life.

## **5. Historical Progression of the Middle East**

### **5.1 Middle East Under the Rule of Ottoman Empire**

The Ottoman Empire stepped foot in the Arabian Peninsula during the reign of Selim I with the conquest of Mamluks. Mamluks were based in Syria, West Arabia and Egypt. They also had important cities such as Aleppo, Damascus, and Tripoli. These cities were important because they were centers of trades. Conquest of those cities meant a huge tax and trade revenue for the Ottomans. This can be counted as Ottomans first conquest in the Middle East after Anatolia. Last Mamluk Sultan was hanged by the Ottomans in 1517 and after this the main land of the Mamluks was started to be called “Egypt”. Mamluks were not Egyptian. They originated from Qipchak Turks from Central Asia but they were Sunni Muslims like Ottomans so their culture was somewhat similar with the people of Ottomans.

When Syria was conquered by the Ottomans, although the level of income has been tried to be increased, the population had decreased in the region. Representatives of the Ottoman Empire made agreements with local rulers or influencers who were mainly sheikhs in order to increase prosperity.

Syria had always been a trade center between traders from East and West. This hadn't changed after the conquest. With the investments of the Ottomans, more traders started coming to Aleppo than ever. After the 15th century, Aleppo was as popular as Damascus and a rivalry began which still lasts today.

After the conquest of Mamluks, Ottomans shared borders with Yemen for about 2 decades and then conquered Yemen. The social structure in Yemen was based on religion. Since the beginning of Islam 2 main groups were



popular among Yemen: Zaydiyya and Shafi'iyya. People who belonged to Zaydi used to live among the mountains whereas people who belonged to Shafi lived in plains.

The situation in Iraq is a bit different than the situation in other Arabian regions. Many wars were fought between Turks and Persians for the region. Ownership of the region changed hands more than a few times in a couple of centuries. This resulted in people in the region being exposed to both Shia and Sunni influences. Until the 16th century people who followed those orders lived in balance. When Safavids were founded this changed. Safavids followed harsh policies regarding non Shia people. Safavids wanted to make everyone Shia who lived under their rule. When the Ottomans saw this happening they decided to follow a similar policy but without being so harsh. This policy's main reason was jihat belief.

## **5.2 Middle East in 19th and 20th Centuries**

Since the period of regression of the Ottomans, the state was falling behind European states in almost all fields. When Christopher Columbus was seeking investments for his discoveries, he also asked Bayezid II. for a budget but he declined the offer like many other states back then.

Because of the age of discovery, warships of Europe were overwhelming against the Ottomans. Especially ships of Spain, Portugal, France, and the United Kingdom were the most powerful ships at that time because they had to withstand enormous ocean waves for a few months and had to survive naval wars in open oceans. Also thanks to the age of discovery, economies of western countries developed faster than the Ottoman's. Gold from South and North Americas was the main reason for that.

After the failure of the 2nd Siege of Wien, European countries acknowledged that the Ottomans could be defeated if they fought altogether. Western countries were not thinking like this until the failure of

the 2nd Siege of Wien because of the failure of crusades and neverending wars within Europe.

After the French Revolution, with the assistance of nationalism, the number and effectiveness of internal problems within the Ottoman Empire had increased. The Ottomans were dealing with conquests coming from the Balkans even before the revolution. After the Revolution, with the provocations of western countries many ethnic groups in the Balkans revolted against Ottomans. This weakened the Ottoman Empire's ability to withstand invasions from the West and East.

One of the main reasons for European countries to desire lands in the Middle East was that it was easy to defeat the Ottomans at that time. Ottomans were too busy with internal disturbances. Janissaries had gained too much influence in the state. Even "Young" Osman was suffocated and murdered by the Janissaries. The state could not send enough men to defend the homeland from Europeans so the Ottomans tried to solve problems without wars but of course Western countries knew that the Ottomans' situation was bad so they demanded lots of things from the state and the state had to give lots of privileges and land to the European countries.

One of the most significant wars of the 19th century was the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-1829. This conflict saw the Ottoman Empire face off against the Russian Empire, which was expanding southward. The war ended with the Ottoman Empire ceding control of much of the Balkans to Russia.

Another significant conflict was the Greek War of Independence, which lasted from 1821 to 1832. The Greeks sought to break away from Ottoman rule and establish their own independent state. The war was marked by atrocities on both sides and resulted in the establishment of the Kingdom of Greece.

### **5.3 Middle East During the Great War**

In 1912 a war broke out in the Balkans. In the 1st Balkan War, Ottomans fought against Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro. This war wore down all states which took part in the war. As an outcome the Ottomans lost a land of about 165,000 km<sup>2</sup> and lost about 6.5 million population.

After the first Balkan War, the Kingdom of Bulgaria had gained more land than other kingdoms. Other states believed that this was outrageous and unfair so they declared war against the Kingdom of Bulgaria in 1913 and seized land from the Kingdom of Bulgaria. In this war, the Ottomans managed to regain the control of Edirne.

The Arab Revolt, which took place between 1916 and 1918, was a significant campaign for both sides. Arab tribes rose up in the Arab Revolt in opposition to Ottoman control. The Hashemite dynasty, which aimed to build an independent Arab state, led the uprising. The British, who saw a chance to undermine the Ottoman Empire, aided the Arab Revolt.

Ottoman centralization and Turkification efforts played a significant role in the Arab uprisings. The Ottoman Empire began a program of centralization in the late 19th and early 20th century in an effort to establish stronger control over its enormous domains. As a result of this effort, Arabs and other non-Turkish populations were exposed to Turkish language and culture. The Arab population, who felt Turkish language and culture were being forced upon their cultures, was extremely opposed to these measures.

The British launched a campaign in Palestine in 1917, and as a result, they were able to retake Jerusalem from the Ottomans. An important triumph

for the Allies, the conquest of Jerusalem had a huge effect on the region. Since Jerusalem is a holy site for both Muslims and Christians, Muslims were devastated after the conquest and the Ottoman army had lost huge morale.

The Ottoman Empire was significantly impacted by the First World War. Throughout the battle, the empire lost a sizable portion of its territory and experienced severe economic and political turmoil. The Armistice of Mudros, signed in 1918 by the Ottoman Empire, should have put an end to the war in the Middle East but since the articles of this agreement was too harsh, Turks started their war of independence in 1919 and the war had ended in 1923 when Republic of Turkey was founded.

The foundation of new states in the Middle East followed the emergence of new regional powers. The League of Nations gave Britain the authority to rule Iraq and Palestine in 1920, while France received the authority to rule Syria and Lebanon. The mandates were meant to be short-lived, with the end goal being the creation of sovereign states in these areas.

There were difficulties in establishing these new states. The local population opposed the mandates because they viewed them as a continuation of colonialism. Nationalist movements that wanted to create separate states in the area also resisted the mandates.

## **5.4 The Middle East after the Great War**

After the World Wars many states were founded in the region such as Syria, Lebanon and Jordan mainly with the assistance of the United Kingdom and France. Around this time, Arab nationalism also began gaining considerable power in the Middle East. The goal of Arab

nationalists was to create a single, independent Arab state that would include the entire region.

The state of Israel was founded in 1948. Israel was a gamechanger in the region. Israelis and Arabs claimed Palestine as their righteous land. Arabs and Jews see each other as a threat to their nations and religions. Many Arab countries did not recognize the state of Israel even though the United Nations had recognized it.

The Arab-Israeli conflict was also a major factor in Middle Eastern politics at the time. The 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the 1967 Six-Day War, and the 1973 Yom Kippur War were among the conflicts and battles that the region saw after the formation of the state of Israel in 1948. The dispute is still going strong today and is still a major cause of unrest in the area.

Significant social and economic transformation occurred in the Middle East after World Wars.. Particularly in nations like Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Kuwait, the region's wealth and economic growth increased significantly as a result of the discovery of oil. Unfortunately, because of the uneven distribution of this wealth, many people in the area still suffer poverty and a lack of development.

The Middle East was significantly impacted by the Cold War during this time. Both the Soviet Union and the United States supported their respective allies militarily and economically in their efforts to gain power in the region. In an effort to further their geopolitical objectives there, the two superpowers also used the region as a theater for proxy conflicts.

All states had understood the importance of oil at both war and peace times and took action to benefit from oil resources in the Middle East. This is one of the major reasons for the proxy wars in the Middle East by the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

Around this time, the rise of political Islam was another important development. Islamist organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood aimed to

advance a more traditional, religiously based politics in the area. Certain parts of the population fully supported these movements, especially in nations like Egypt and Iran.

## **6. Social and Economic Structure in the Middle East**

The religious and traditional cultural values of the Middle East at this time had a significant impact on the social structure of the region. The majority of people in the area are Muslims, with Sunni and Shia faiths being the most common. Religious leaders frequently play a large role in society, and these religious traditions have been at the heart of social order throughout the Middle East for ages.

The value of family and community bonds was one of the fundamental aspects of social organization in the Middle East at this time. Social support and economic mobility depended heavily on family and kinship networks, and families frequently collaborated to prosper economically. There were also social class differences, with elites controlling a sizable amount of social influence.

Colonialism also had a significant effect on the Middle Eastern economy. Natural resources available in the area were taken advantage of by colonial powers for their personal gain. The extraction of these resources frequently resulted in the destruction of the environment, the displacement of local residents, and the development of economic dependence on foreign forces. By doing this, Western countries made sure that if Arabs decided to get rid of them, it would cost them an arm and a leg.

In the decades following the end of colonialism in the Middle East, the region saw the emergence of new nationalist movements that sought to establish independent states and modernize their societies. Nationalism and modernization had a significant impact on the social and economic

structures of the Middle East, as they led to the creation of new political institutions, social classes, and economic systems.

Nationalist movements in the Middle East were often based on the idea of Arab or Islamic unity, and sought to promote cultural and political independence from Western powers. The emergence of nationalist movements led to the establishment of new political institutions, including parliaments, political parties, and bureaucracies, which were designed to promote democratic governance and social justice.

Aforementioned events and structures shaped the life of women in the region as well. Women were usually excluded from the workforce, they were forced to wear specific clothings which were chosen by men, they could not travel by themselves, they could not cast votes in elections and so on.

Women rights activists worked so hard in the region and succeeded. Nowadays in some Arab countries women can drive without the presence of a man in the vehicle or cast votes in the elections but still public opinion about women is not modern enough. Many parents do not send their daughters to schools, men beat their wives and daughters. The list can be expanded.

## **7. Internal Conflicts and Disturbance in the 2nd Half of the 20th Century in the Middle East**

### **7.1 Egypt**

#### **A. Revolution of 1952**

The Egyptian Revolution of 1952 was a coup d'état led by a group of military officers, known as the Free Officers Movement, against the ruling monarchy of King Farouk. The revolution took place on July 23, 1952, and marked the end of the monarchy and the beginning of the Republic of Egypt.

The movement was made up of young military officers who were dissatisfied with the state of the country, which they saw as being corrupt, inefficient, and dominated by foreign powers.

It is possible to say that during this revolution, way less people died compared to other coup d'états or attempts. This is one of the reasons for the people in Egypt to support this coup. Even today some people in Egypt commemorate this coup every year with joy.

After the revolution, the new government implemented a series of sweeping reforms, including land redistribution, the nationalization of industry, and the establishment of a social welfare system. The government also pursued a policy of Arab nationalism and anti-colonialism, seeking to unite the Arab world and free it from Western influence.

### **B. Conscripts Riots in 1986**

In 1986 there were rumors about the Egyptian Government increasing the compulsory service time to 4 years without providing any benefits for the soldiers. Of course this resulted in discontent among soldiers. Some soldiers destroyed two hotels in Cairo and assaulted tourist areas. The military was called upon to crush those rebels. Tanks, planes and commandos were sent to take down rebels.

## **7.2 Islamic Republic of Iran**



### **A. 1953 Iranian Coup d'état**

The 1953 Iranian coup d'état was a covert operation carried out by the United States and the United Kingdom that led to the overthrow of Iran's Prime Minister, Mohammad Mosaddegh. The coup took place on August 19, 1953, and marked a significant turning point in Iranian history.

Mosaddegh was a popular, democratically elected leader who had nationalized the Iranian oil industry, which was previously controlled by the British. This move angered the British government, which saw the nationalization as a threat to its economic interests. The US government, meanwhile, was concerned that Mosaddegh's socialist leanings would lead Iran to become a Soviet ally, and saw the nationalization of the oil industry as a threat to US economic interests in the region.

Propaganda, deception, and covert activities were used by the intelligence agencies to sow discord in Iran and to overthrow Mosaddegh's administration. Mosaddegh was detained and put in prison after the coup, and Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was restored as the nation's ruler.

### **B. 1963 Demonstrations in Iran**

The protests were sparked by the arrest of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, a prominent Shia cleric who was critical of the Pahlavi dynasty and its policies.

Despite the fact that the protests were generally peaceful, the government responded to them with a violence that left hundreds of protestors deceased. As the government imposed martial law and sent the military to suppress the demonstrations, many activists and members of the opposition were detained and subjected to torture.

The 1963 demonstrations marked a turning point in Iranian politics and set the stage for the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The crackdown on the protests galvanized opposition to the government and helped create a sense of solidarity among various opposition groups. The demonstrations also highlighted the growing discontent with the Pahlavi dynasty and its policies, particularly with regard to the treatment of religious leaders.

### **C. Islamic Revolution in 1978**

The Iranian Revolution, also known as the Islamic Revolution, was a political and social movement that took place in Iran from 1978 to 1979. The revolution resulted in the overthrow of the Pahlavi dynasty and the establishment of an Islamic republic.

Islamists, Marxists, nationalists, and liberals were among the coalition of groups that led the revolution; they were all united in their opposition to the Pahlavi dynasty and its Western-backed policies. Mass demonstrations, strikes, civil disobedience, and violent skirmishes between demonstrators and security personnel all defined the revolution.

The revolution culminated in the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in April 1979, establishment of Islamic law as the basis of the legal system.

The revolution had far-reaching consequences for Iran and the wider region. The new government pursued an anti-Western and anti-imperialist foreign policy, which led to tensions with the United States and other Western powers. The revolution also inspired other Islamist movements across the Middle East, including the rise of Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Many social and cultural changes were brought about in Iran as a result of the revolution, including severe clothing regulations and limitations on

social activities considered to be contrary to Islam. Together with political dissidents, religious and ethnic minorities were also oppressed as a result of the revolution.

Iranian politics and society are still shaped by the Iranian Revolution's legacy, with the country's religious leaders having a key role in politics and the revolution's influence still being felt strongly in the nation's foreign policy.

## **7.3 Iraq**

### **A. 1959 Mosul Uprising**

Arab nationalists attempted a coup in order to overthrow the prime minister of Iraq and install a government which would follow Arab nationalism. The coup attempt failed miserably and chaos took control of the streets for several days. Religious and nationalist groups fought for settling the political and religious scores.

### **B. Ramadan Revolution**

The Ramadan Revolution of Iraq was a military coup that took place in Iraq in July 1963. The coup was led by a group of Iraqi military officers who were part of the left-leaning Free Officers Movement, which was opposed to the government of Prime Minister Abd al-Karim Qasim.

The Muslim holy month of Ramadan, in which the coup took place, inspired the coup's name. The military officers overthrew Qasim's administration and put him and a number of his top officials to death. Many Iraqis who were unhappy with Qasim's government—which they viewed as corrupt and ineffective—at first applauded the coup.

The new administration, however, was swiftly criticized for its violations of human rights and repression of political dissent. Together with other difficulties, the new administration had to deal with the north of the country's Kurdish uprising and relations with Iran, its neighbor.

The Ramadan Revolution had a big impact on Iraq and the rest of the region. The new administration followed an Arab nationalism strategy and aimed to establish better ties with other Arab countries in the region. The administration also carried out a number of changes, including nationalizing important industries and redistributing land.

### **C. November 1963 Iraqi Coup d'état**

The Iraqi coup d'état of November 1963 was a military takeover that happened in Iraq. A group of military officers hostile to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Arif's administration and others who wanted the Ba'ath Party to retake power led the coup.

A number of changes, including the nationalization of important industries and land redistribution, were carried out by the new administration, which was led by the Ba'ath Party. The new administration also promoted an Arab nationalism strategy and sought better ties with other Arab nations in the region.

However, the new administration also had to deal with a number of difficulties, such as a Kurdish uprising in the north of the nation and hostilities with Iran, a close neighbor. The government's repression of political dissent and violations of human rights ultimately contributed to its defeat in 1968 during a second military coup led by General Abdul Rahman Arif.

The legacy of the November 1963 Iraqi coup d'état remains controversial, with some viewing it as a positive step towards reform and others seeing it as a precursor to the authoritarian rule that would follow. The Ba'ath Party

would go on to rule Iraq for over three decades, with Saddam Hussein serving as its leader from 1979 until his overthrow in 2003.

## **7.4 Yemen**

### **A. North Yemen Civil War**

The Yemeni Revolution, commonly referred to as the North Yemen Civil War, was a struggle that lasted in North Yemen from 1962 to 1970. The Free Officers Movement, a group of military officers, staged a coup against the occupying Imamate administration and proclaimed a republic, which set off the war.

The new administration, which had the support of Egypt and other nationalist Arab nations, pushed a socialist reform and land redistribution agenda. The old tribal elites and religious authorities that backed the previous Imamate administration opposed the new government, nevertheless.

The conflict quickly escalated into a full-scale civil war, with both sides receiving support from foreign powers. The government received support from Egypt, the Soviet Union, and other socialist states, while the opposition received support from Saudi Arabia and other conservative Arab states.

The war was characterized by heavy fighting and atrocities committed by both sides, including mass killings of civilians and prisoners of war. The war also had a significant impact on the civilian population, with many people being displaced from their homes and facing severe food shortages.

The conflict eventually ended in 1970, when the government and the opposition signed the Cairo Agreement, which established a power-sharing government and granted amnesty to former members of the Imamate government. The war resulted in the deaths of an estimated 100,000 people and had a lasting impact on the political and social landscape of Yemen.

## **B. Second Yemenite War**

The Second Yemenite War was a conflict between North Yemen and South Yemen that took place from 1972 to 1974. The war was fought over a number of issues, including border disputes, political ideologies, and economic interests.

Border skirmishes were the starting point of the conflict, which developed into a full-fledged war in 1972. Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations supported North Yemen, while the Soviet Union and other communist nations provided military support to South Yemen.

The South Yemeni army made substantial early advances in the conflict, which witnessed intense fighting and huge deaths on both sides. However, with Saudi Arabia's assistance, the North Yemeni army was able to push back and subsequently reclaim the majority of the lost land.

A cease-fire agreement and the creation of a joint commission to settle unresolved disputes between the two nations marked the end of the war in 1974. Nonetheless, hostilities between North and South Yemen persisted.

## **C. Yemenite War of 1979**

The conflict within South Yemen began in July 1978, when a faction of the Yemeni Socialist Party led by Ali Nasser Mohammed launched a coup against the ruling Marxist-Leninist government. The coup was successful, and Mohammed established himself as the new President of South Yemen.

However, the ousted Marxist-Leninist government launched a counter-coup in June 1979, sparking a brief civil war. The conflict saw heavy fighting in the capital city of Aden and other parts of the country, with both sides committing atrocities against civilians. The war ended in July 1979 with the Marxist-Leninist government retaking power and Mohammed fleeing to North Yemen.

### **D. South Yemen Civil War**

The South Yemen Civil War was a conflict that took place in South Yemen from January 1986 to July 1986. The war was fought between two factions of the ruling Yemeni Socialist Party, the supporters of the President who sought to establish closer ties with the Soviet Union and other communist countries, and the supporters of the Vice President who favored a more moderate approach and sought to improve relations with neighboring Gulf Arab states.

The conflict began with a power struggle between the president and vice president, which escalated into a full-scale civil war in January 1986. The fighting saw heavy casualties on both sides, with both factions committing atrocities against civilians. The war ended in July 1986 with the vice president's forces emerging victorious.

## **8. International Conflicts**

### **8.1 Turkish-Kurdish Conflict**

The Turkish-Kurdish conflict is a long-standing conflict that began in the 1920s and continued into the 21st century. The conflict involves the struggle between the Turkish state and the Kurdish minority in Turkey, who have long sought greater autonomy or independence.

Culture between Turkish and Kurdish people is different from each other. In history, a state of Kurds was never founded. Kurdish people lived under the rule of other states but this did not let them from trying to find one. Kurd nationalists have been trying to take advantage of Turkey since the beginning of the Turkish War of Independence. Their main objective and demand was to form an independent Kurdish state by taking lands from Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria.

The Republic of Turkey suppressed any revolt attempts and terror actions by Kurdish nationalists with military forces. Demands of Kurds which may lead to separatist movements were prevented by the Turkish government.

This conflict reached its climax when Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) was founded in 1978. At first PKK's main purpose was to create an independent Kurdish state but as time passed by its goal changed to increasing autonomy for Kurds in Turkey as well as making Kurdish one of the official languages of Turkey and education in Kurdish. About 55,000 people died during these conflicts to this day.

## **8.2 Gulf War**

Due to a long-standing territorial dispute and growing economic tensions between the two nations, Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990. Iraq said Kuwait was overproducing oil, which was harming Iraq's economy by driving down oil prices. Iraq further asserted that Kuwait was historically a part of Iraq and that Kuwait was conducting oil exploration activities on Iraqi soil.

Together with other nations, the United States urged that Iraq remove its soldiers after it invaded Kuwait. Following Iraq's refusal to comply, the UN Security Council adopted a number of resolutions allowing for the use of force, if necessary, to drive Iraq out of Kuwait.

A US-led coalition began a huge air campaign in January 1991, which was quickly followed by a brief ground invasion. The technological and military advantage of the coalition forces allowed them to easily defeat the Iraqi military. The coalition forces marched into Iraq itself while the Iraqi army was forced back from Kuwait.

On February 28, 1991, a cease-fire was reached regarding the war. Iraq was compelled to agree to UN resolutions that required it to stop developing weapons of mass destruction and make reparations to Kuwait. With the withdrawal of the coalition forces, Saddam Hussein remained in power in Iraq.



The Middle East and world politics were significantly impacted by the First Gulf War. The conflict signaled a turning point in US foreign policy because it showed the US could successfully lead a coalition of allies against a shared foe. Also, it resulted in the creation of a no-fly zone over Iraq and the implementation of economic sanctions against Iraq that persisted for more than ten years. Iraq's infrastructure and civilian population were severely damaged by the war, which caused the nation to experience prolonged economic hardship and political instability.

### **8.3 Iran-Iraq War**

From 1980 to 1988, Iran and Iraq fought a long and violent war known as the Iran-Iraq War. The Shatt al-Arab waterway, which serves as the border between the two countries, was the source of the conflict.

Both sides used numerous troops, tanks, and pieces of artillery in a sequence of offensives and counter offensives that defined the fight. Chemical weapons were also widely employed during the conflict, with both sides using them to strike each other's soldiers and civilian populations.

Iran was particularly hard hit by the war, suffering significant human and financial losses. The United States and other Western nations that supported Iraq also sustained huge losses.

In 1988, there was a cease-fire that saw both sides agree to revert to their pre-conflict borders. Both for the two involved countries and for the larger region, the conflict had far-reaching repercussions. It led to the Middle East's destabilization and gave rise to long-standing tensions between Iran and Iraq that still exist today.

According to estimates, the Iran-Iraq War resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths, injuries, and substantial environmental harm due to the deployment of chemical weapons. Additionally, it had significant

negative effects on the economy and society, displacing millions of people and disrupting regional trade and commerce.

## **8.4 Six-Day War**

The Six-Day War was a brief but intense conflict that took place between June 5 and June 10, 1967, primarily between Israel and three Arab countries: Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. The war was the result of a series of escalating tensions and hostilities between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

The war began with a surprise attack by the Israeli Air Force against the Egyptian Air Force, which largely destroyed the Egyptian air force on the ground. This initial attack was followed by a ground offensive that resulted in Israel capturing the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria, and the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) from Jordan.

Israel won the conflict easily, successfully defending itself against the Arab coalition while also gaining control of lands that greatly increased its border. The conflict had a tremendous effect on the military and political power dynamics in the Middle East, and its repercussions are still felt today.

The fight also had significant geopolitical effects because it increased tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States, two major participants. Furthermore, it contributed to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and resulted in the displacement of several Palestinians.

Saudi Arabia did not participate directly in the Six-Day War, but it did provide some support to the Arab coalition that fought against Israel. Saudi Arabia, along with other Arab states, imposed an oil embargo on countries that supported Israel, including the United States, which had supplied military aid to Israel during the conflict. The embargo had a significant impact on the global economy and helped to raise oil prices.

However, Saudi Arabia did not send troops to fight in the war, and its involvement was largely limited to diplomatic and economic measures.

Iraq did not physically take part in the Six-Day War either, but it did lend considerable assistance to the Arab alliance that fought Israel. To support the Jordanian army as it fought Israel in the West Bank, Iraq sent some of its armed units to Jordan. Nonetheless, there was no direct conflict between Israeli soldiers and Iraqi forces.

## **9. The Middle East in the 21st Century**

At the beginning of the 21st century with the increased demand in natural resources such as oil and natural gas, both of which are found in large quantities in the Middle East, Western countries started to care about the region more than ever. Social structure today would not let a direct invasion in the region. Many people would protest wars if it happened so western states had to find indirect ways to interfere.

### **The Arab Spring**

The Arab Spring was a series of protests, uprisings, and revolutions that swept across several countries in the Middle East and North Africa in late 2010 and early 2011. The term "Arab Spring" was coined to describe the wave of popular protests and calls for political reform that emerged in response to longstanding grievances related to political corruption, economic inequality, and human rights abuses.

The Arab Spring had its start in Tunisia in December 2010 when Mohamed Bouazizi, a street seller, set himself on fire in retaliation for the abuse and humiliation he had received from local authorities. Bouazizi's act of protest triggered large-scale protests and calls for political reform, ultimately resulting in Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's overthrow in January 2011.

Later, the protests expanded to neighboring nations like Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Bahrain. These demonstrations led to the toppling of established regimes in some instances, while in others they were suppressed by brutal government crackdowns.

Egypt experienced a period of political instability and transition following the Arab Spring. After weeks of significant demonstrations and strikes, Hosni Mubarak, the country's longtime leader, was forced to step down in 2011. After Mubarak was overthrown, the nation was ruled by a transitional military council for a while before Mohamed Morsi, the first president of Egypt to be elected democratically, came into office in 2012. But Morsi's time in office was brief. General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi staged a military coup to remove him in 2013, which was followed by a wave of protests and calls for his ouster. El-Sisi then took over as Egypt's de facto leader, and he has since established his authority by repressing dissent and criticism.

Egypt has experienced a revival of authoritarianism under el-rule, Sisi's with a crackdown on political opposition, civil society, and the media. There have been several reports of unlawful murders, illegal arrests, and other violations of human rights. In addition, the government has expanded its campaign against the Muslim Brotherhood, which was designated a terrorist group in 2013, and has targeted religious minorities, particularly Coptic Christians.

Syria entered a protracted civil war after the Arab Spring that is still raging today. When there was a public revolt against President Bashar al-administration Assad's in 2011, the conflict started. Following a harsh crackdown by the Syrian government, rebel organizations formed with the aim of overthrowing the government.

Since then, a variety of regional and international parties have become involved in the conflict, with the United States and its allies supporting the opposition and Russia and Iran supporting the Syrian government. With an

estimated 500,000 dead and millions homeless, the war has had terrible effects on the Syrian people.

The world and the region have both been significantly impacted by the conflict. The war took on a new dimension with the establishment of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (ISIS), and the international world became concerned as the group made territorial gains in Syria. Millions of Syrians are in need of aid as a result of the fighting.

There have been several diplomatic initiatives to put an end to the violence in Syria, such as the Astana process run by Russia, Iran, and Turkey. The conflict, which still affects the area and the world, has not yet found a sustainable conclusion despite their efforts.

Protesters in Lebanon initially demanded the resignation of the government and the implementation of reforms as a response to economic problems and governmental corruption. The major Shiite terrorist organization Hezbollah, which is also a political party in Lebanon, was a major topic of discussion throughout the protests, which finally shifted their attention to sectarian conflicts.

The Lebanese government has struggled to deal with problems including corruption, sectarian strife, and the refugee crisis brought on by the conflict in Syria. A sense of instability has also been exacerbated by the numerous security crises that have occurred in the nation, such as bombings and killings.

The most recent crisis in Lebanon began in late 2019, when protests erupted over the government's handling of the economic crisis and widespread corruption. The protests led to the resignation of the government, but the country has since been unable to form a new government due to political divisions and disagreements over the distribution of power.

Yemen has experienced significant turmoil and instability since the Arab Spring protests which led to the dismissal of longtime President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The situation in Yemen has been complicated by a variety of factors, including regional rivalries, sectarian tensions, and the presence of militant groups.

In 2014, the Houthi rebel group, which is aligned with Iran and represents Yemen's Zaidi Shiite Muslim minority, seized control of the capital city of Sanaa and forced the government to flee. This triggered a civil war between the Houthis and the government, which was supported by a coalition of Sunni Arab countries led by Saudi Arabia.

Millions of people in Yemen are now facing food insecurity, displacement, and a lack of access to essential services like healthcare and education as a result of the war. A naval blockade and airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition, which have been targeted for killing civilians, have made the situation worse.

The crisis in Yemen has persisted despite attempts to negotiate a settlement, with both sides participating in bloody fighting and terrorist assaults. The COVID-19 pandemic has also afflicted Yemen, which has put additional burden on the nation's healthcare system and economy.

## **10. Questions to be Addressed (QTBA)**

- 1) How to increase aid to civilians with humanitarian aid in the countries in need?
- 2) How to decrease religion and race based discrimination?
- 3) How can long-term peace be ensured in the region?
- 4) How can short-term peace be ensured in the region?
- 5) How to decrease the influence of other states in the region?
- 6) How to help countries to develop using their own natural resources in the region?
- 7) What precautions can be taken to help civilians in case of possible future wars?

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