

# CIMUN VI

Chicago International Model United Nations  
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## United Nations Security Council Background Guide



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Dear Delegates,

It is our distinct pleasure to welcome you to the sixth annual Chicago International Model United Nations. If this is your first time as a delegate at CIMUN, you will soon realize that this will be unlike any other conference that you have ever attended. All committees at CIMUN feature a fully-integrated crisis simulation, forcing delegates to think on their feet and work between multiple committees to solve challenging problems in a variety of forums.

From the General Assembly and Security Council to the Cabinets and Regional Bodies, all committees at CIMUN are vital participants in the crisis, and successful delegations will have to work as a team to coordinate their efforts to best promote their national interests, simulating the work of actual diplomats and politicians. As a result, this background guide and the committee topics you have been assigned are intended only as a starting point. It is much more important to be familiar with the “character” and vital interests of your country than to focus on specifics, as you will inevitably be placed in many situations where you will be forced to think outside of the box and make important decisions in real-time. To assist you with this challenge, we encourage you to take full advantage of our extensive Home Government and Simulations staff and the variety of other resources that will be available during the conference.

Additionally, CIMUN employs a much different philosophy than most other high school conferences. Instead of forcing delegates to work towards unrealistic compromises and pass “consensus” resolutions at any cost, we encourage you to faithfully represent your national interests and to always place your country’s strategic motivations, both public and covert, at the forefront, even if it means being confrontational. Our crisis has been specially designed to pit the interests of key players against each other in ways that will involve every country at the conference, and we strongly advise you to always keep your nation’s own interests in mind.

We will continue to post more specifics, updates, and research materials as the date of the conference approaches. Information on Position Papers and other requirements can be found on our website in the “Position Papers” section. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us or your committee dais. See you in December!

Sincerely,

Greg Young  
Undersecretary-General of Simulations  
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Tyler Doyle  
Director of Present Day Simulation



## UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

### **Topic 1: The Situation in Azerbaijan**

Azerbaijan is a predominantly Muslim nation with Turkish backgrounds located in the Middle East. After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, it achieved independence in 1920, until it was taken over by the USSR, like most Caucus nations. With the fall of the Soviets it gained its independence in 1991, along with many other Soviet controlled nations in the area, causing regional tension and conflict. Azerbaijan is a nation surrounded by many current dissension areas. It is bordered by its former controller Russia to the north, Georgia to the northwest, Armenia to the west, and Iran to the south. Azerbaijan's central location makes it a current critical point not only because of its areas of conflict, but also because of its economic and political role in the oil industry.

In 1991, after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Nagorno-Karabakh region in southwest Azerbaijan declared itself a free and separate state from Azerbaijan, although it was not recognized by any other nation state. Before Azerbaijan was even a free state, this area had been in conflict. Historically, the Nagorno-Karabakh region has been under the control of many different groups and empires throughout the ages, although most claims before WWI have been disputed. With the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the Caucus nations of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia joined together to form the Transcaucasian Federation, which dissolved after only three months. Many Armenians lived in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, causing conflict between Azerbaijan and neighboring Armenia almost immediately after the dissolution. In 1988, ethnic pressures escalated, and war broke out in the region between Azerbaijan and the Armenians who lived in Nagorno-Karabakh after Azerbaijanis killed 100 Armenians after the Armenians called for the unification of the Nagorno-Karabakh region with Armenia. Armenians, who held the majority in the region, continued to demand independence, and this conflict, combined with the downfall of the USSR and the independence of Azerbaijan, resulted in horrific acts of war and ethnic cleansing on both sides. The conflict began to impact the population and economy so badly that in 1989 Moscow took control of Nagorno-Karabakh in an attempt to control the situation. As a result of the conflict, almost 1 million civilians have been displaced on both sides. Nearly 400,000 Armenians living in Azerbaijan were forced to flee to either Russia or Armenia. By 1994, both Armenia and Azerbaijan had been devastated by the fighting economically, socially, and politically, and were both ready for a ceasefire. International intervention on the part of the US, Russia, and UN helped mediate a ceasefire in the warring region, and the newly created OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Minsk Group was assigned the task of helping both sides work out terms of agreement.

This type of border and ethnic conflict is not uncommon in post-Soviet areas (look at recent conflict escalations in Georgia and South Ossetia), although it has been known as one of the deadliest. Today, even though legally not recognized as an independent state, the Nagorno-Karabakh region has a de facto government that asserts some power, and has even hosted its own (internationally unrecognized) elections in 2002. The situation is still currently in a ceasefire, with Armenia occupying 20% of Azerbaijani land and Azerbaijan holding onto the Nagorno-Karabakh region. One of the most pressing situations that still needs to be resolved is the question of human rights in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, especially for the Armenians.

There have been many proposals made over how to bring peace to the Nagorno-Karabakh region. One is to have Armenia withdraw completely from the area, in exchange for establishing an oil pipeline going through both countries to Turkey; or even by giving the Nagorno-Karabakh region recognized, legitimate independence. President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan has offered to pay Armenia transit revenues from the pipeline if created, in exchange for Nagorno-Karabakh. These pipelines would be mutually beneficial economically to both nations, but until peace and cooperation can come to both nations, building the pipeline would be unfeasible. Currently, most opposition has occurred from the Armenians, who consider the situation non-negotiable, and who continually threaten to resurrect the conflict.

Recently, the conflict has yet again escalated. President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan has repeatedly made statements professing that Azerbaijan would use force to recover their lost territories (nearly 20% of their original territory), and in the past two years shootings along the conflict area have increased, with both sides placing blame on the other. With dissension once more heating up, the pressure to build up forces and begin stockpiling weapons is almost eminent. In such tumultuous times, an arms race occurring in this area of the world is looked at with alarm. Leaders of other post-Soviet nations are also watching the situation carefully, and worry that conflict between ethnic groups in Azerbaijan could influence conflicts in their own areas. Nations such as Russia, the United States, and France have been working with the OSCE Minsk Group on continuing the ceasefire, and are encouraging neighboring nations such as Turkey to help take the initiative in settling the conflict. Recently, the co-chair of the OSCE was replaced by Tina Kaidanow, a US diplomat who worked in Kosovo; an appointment that seems to be going over well on both sides of the table.

Because of Azerbaijan's location, the nation's relations with neighboring states influence nearly all the economic, social, and political decisions of the country. Azerbaijan's relations with Russia play an especially important role. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russian relations with Azerbaijan have been tense ever since it was discovered that Russia was supplying Armenia with billions of dollars of armaments during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. With Russia and Azerbaijan also being two of the biggest oil producers in the region, relations over the construction of oil pipelines has also been strained. Azerbaijan is home to a large portion of the BTC pipeline, a large oil artery that bypasses Russia to provide energy to Europe. As a former Soviet territory, Azerbaijan, along with many of the other Caucasus states, have been working to move away from Russian dominance, much to the chagrin of Moscow, who still views the region as its own "backyard."

## Topics 2: The Situation on the Somali Coast

Somalia, a country on the Eastern Coast of Africa, gained its independence from Britain in 1960, and became what we know presently as Somalia upon joining with other previously occupied African regions. The goal of Somali nationalists had always been to achieve a united Somalia, and this strong nationalism was what initially brought Somalia together despite Somalia's extreme poverty, lack of resources, and complex social order based on deeply segregated clan-families. Familial genealogy, a source of pride amongst Somalis, is what would lead to the ultimate failure in unifying the nation in peaceful organization. In 1969, a coup resulted in an authoritarian socialist rule, as well as greater Soviet involvement in Somalia. With their assistance, by 1977, Somalia was able to build an army, heavy artillery, and a modern air force. However, by the 1980's, the USSR was facing so much internal struggle that it diverted its attention away from Somalia. By then, clan dissent and government dissatisfaction became so rampant that by 1990, government control barely reached past the capital city of Mogadishu. In 1993, the UN stepped in to alleviate the famine and chaos that had spread throughout the country. After two years, however, order had not yet been reestablished. Since 2002, however, work has been done in order to establish a Transitional Federal Government, as well as Somali Transitional Federal institutions in order to bring peace and order to Somalia. While some progress has been made, Somalia is still a de-unified, corrupt state that relies heavily on international aid and support.

Piracy is an ancient war-like act that has historically been problematic because it is an act independent of any national government, and occurs on the seas. Piracy off the east coast of Africa has been recently growing at an exceptionally fast rate, with 41 known attacks in 2007, 122 in 2008, and 102 in 2009. While legendarily known as treasure plunderers, modern pirates off the eastern coast of Africa target new treasures, such as tankers filled with Saudi oil, or Ukrainian freighters on weapon transit. Oil is especially at risk, as most of Europe's oil supply from the Middle East is sent via tanker around the coast of Africa. Possibly the most recent highly publicized pirate attack off the coast of Somalia was the US cargo relief ship, Maersk Alabama, in the Gulf of Aden this past April, along with the kidnapping of the ship's skipper. However, despite all the publicity, within two days of the safe return of the skipper and the death of the kidnappers, pirates attacked 4 new merchant ships. Currently, there are still about 19 different ships containing over 300 crew members worth over \$100 million dollars being held by pirates. These events do not often appear in the news, due to the fact that most countries do not rank piracy high on their list of threats. Pirates presently make most of their profit off of ship ransoms, as most ship insurers will pay upwards and over \$1 million in order to return ships, because although piracy is an increasing threat, the odds of a ship being attacked are still less than 1%.

Piracy is rampant off the eastern coast of Africa, but it is possibly most condensed on the Somali coast. Piracy is a highly profitable industry, and a large and very appealing employer in a nation who's average per capita GDP is a mere \$600. In an unstable and divided nation, piracy is not only a means for profit, but for survival. Somalia is located along key sea-lanes that transport  $\frac{1}{2}$  the world's cargo, and  $\frac{1}{3}$  of Europe's oil. In a nation where job availability is limited and corrupt, piracy is an easy recruit. Part of the growing, and often-unrealized dangers of piracy, however, are the larger criminal action it is linked

too. Somali pirates have also been linked to the Islam extremists “Al-Shabab”, a group with al-Qaeda connections.

Nations such as China, France, India, Russia, the United Kingdom and the US, among others, have lent forces to protect the waters off the east coast of Africa and Somalia under the Combined Task Force 151. This coastline, however, spans 1 million square miles, something that is impossible to monitor with only 14 warships. In the past, nations such as England and France have seen piracy as only a slight inconvenience, and have hired privateers to weed out the problem and then tried the criminals in common law courts, using current laws. The US has been tentative in authorizing military force in Somalia after the 1993 conflict in Mogadishu, which resulted in the loss of 18 US soldiers. In April’s pirate/hostage situation, US President Barack Obama would only authorize lethal force when the hostage’s life was directly at risk. Most Western nations refuse to try pirates in their courts of law, not wanting to bring about a Bush/Guantanamo on the high seas-nor the international backlash that comes along with it. Nations have come into agreement with Kenya, who with close proximity to Somalia, has agreed to host and try captured pirates. Kenya, along with most West African and Middle Eastern nations, have a key interest in keeping the West African coastlines free of pirates, but unlike many of these nations, has a relatively stable government system.

Currently, there is a lack of legal authority on how to control piracy in Somalia, as well as a problem in enforcing what laws do exist on the matter. The UN Security Council has passed a series of Chapter 7 Resolutions, including ones that give the right to authorize military forces to pursue pirates into Somali territorial waters, and even onto land, authorizing the use of air strikes if necessary, as well as conducting the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. However, because the conflict is non-governmental and occurs in international waters, rules of engagement are different that in conflicts such as Afghanistan and Iraq. Until a ship is directly attacked, the suspected pirates are treated as citizens, and not as hostile attackers. There exists no international law against sailors being armed. Presently, international humanitarian law and refugee law regulates how and who can try pirates. Accordingly, any nation can try suspected pirates in its own court system no matter that nation’s involvement (if there is any). There have been some convictions, but due to a lack of international resources and evidence, most pirates endure few repercussions.

There has been a call for more international involvement to allow processing and detention of pirates, much in the same way there is for terrorists. Whether it is a movement for pressuring Somali government to take more responsibility for their own territory to an international solution, such a legal council like the International Criminal Court of a UN tribunal.

### **Topic 3: Open Agenda**

As the executive body of the United Nations system, the Security Council is often called upon to deal with urgent situations on very short notice. As a result, the agenda of the Security Council is always open, allowing nearly any new topic to be introduced with the support of a majority of the body. Delegations are encouraged to bring forward agenda items that they feel are pressing and require the attention of the council.

## **Selected Resources:**

Boot, Max. "Pirates, Then and Now." *Foreign Affairs* July-Aug. 2009. Print.  
*An article in the July/August Issue of Foreign Affairs Magazine, contains information on the history of piracy, as well as research and ideas on current measures taken to prevent and control piracy in Eastern Africa.*

Central Intelligence Agency. "Azerbaijan." CIA World Factbook. Updated biweekly. Web.  
*A great place to begin research on any country or conflict area.*

Central Intelligence Agency. "Somalia." CIA World Factbook. Updated biweekly. Web.

Gist, Lawrence. "Human Rights Committee Adopts Recommendation on the Reports of Azerbaijan." *The Examiner*. 31 July 2009. Web.

Meredith, Martin. *The Fate of Africa A History of Fifty Years of Independence*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2006. Print.  
*A lengthy book, but with an excellent chapter on Somali history and conflict, especially in regards to the US and United Nations.*

"New Somali Piracy Resolution Adopted at UN." *The Free Library*. Farlex, 2009. Web.

Pike, John. "Nagorno-Karabakh." *Global Security*, 24 June 2005. Web.  
GlobalSecurity.org

Today.az. Web.  
*An Azerbaijani online news agency closely follows the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh.*

Watson, Ivan. "Gas pipe deal aims to end Russia's monopoly." *CNN*. 13 July 2009. Web.