

Cerritos Fall Conference 2019

4th SPD



Topic: West Bank

Director: Caroline Mendoza

October 12, 2019

To Delegates of Cerritos Novice 2019 Conference

Dear Delegates,
Welcome to Cerritos Novice 2019!

It is our highest honor and pleasure to welcome you all to our annual novice conference here at Cerritos High School. On behalf of the Cerritos High School Model United Nations program, we are proud to host another year of this long-standing conference, where you will become more knowledgeable on international issues, participate in intellectually stimulating discussions, and create new and everlasting friendships.

The CHSMUN program continues to compete around the world as a nationally ranked MUN program. Our delegates utilize diplomacy in order to create complex solutions towards multilateral issues in the global community. Our head chairs are selected from only the best seniors of our program, undergoing a rigorous training process to ensure the highest quality of moderating and grading of debate. Furthermore, all the topic synopses have been reviewed and edited numerous times. We strongly believe that by providing each and every delegate with the necessary tools and understanding, he or she will have everything they need to thrive in all aspects of committee. We thoroughly encourage each delegate to engage in all of the facets of their topic, in order to grow in their skills as a delegate and develop a greater knowledge of the world around them.

Our advisors and staff have put in countless hours to ensure delegates have an amazing experience at the conference. Our greatest hope is that from attending CHSMUN 2019, students are encouraged to continue on in Model United Nations and nevertheless, inspired to spark change in their surrounding communities. With 31 high school committees and 2 middle school committees, CHSMUN 2019 will provide a quality experience for beginners to learn, develop, and grow as delegates.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us! We look forward to seeing you at CHSMUN Novice 2019!

Sincerely,

Brianna Roldan and Tess U-Vongcharoen

Secretary-Generals

4th SPD

West Bank

A Note From the Director

Delegates,

Hi all! My name is Caroline Mendoza and I am beyond excited to be your director for 4th SPD! I am currently a senior at Cerritos High and have been part of MUN for four years now. I plan to pursue Holocaust/genocide studies and have been working with different non-profits as well as the LA Museum of the Holocaust to advocate for human rights abuses abroad, so the West Bank conflict is one very close to my heart. I'm a huge music nerd and collect vinyl, worship The Beatles, and used to be an avid guitarist (when I had time ha). Fun fact: I am Mexican-Korean but can speak neither language because I take French. My future hopes and dreams include studying in Southeast Asia (Cambodia and Vietnam?!) and moving to England to drink all of their tea and marry a Brit. I know the West Bank conflict can be a bit complicated, so please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have! I look forward to meeting you all and can't wait for committee!

Sincerely,

Caroline Mendoza

Director, 4th SPD

Committee Introduction:

4th SPD is the United Nations' fourth main committee to focus on Special Political and Decolonization topics. Founded in 1993, the committee was established for primarily decolonization issues with the goal of allowing all nations to be self-reliant. 4th SPD has developed over time to include varying political subjects, including peacekeeping operations, special political missions, and the effects of atomic radiation.

The committee also covers issues regarding human rights in international disputes, as seen through 4th SPD's establishment of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East as well as the Report of the Special Committee on Israeli Practices- both topics that are addressed annually. Additionally, as technology has grown to be a prominent

issue in today's society, a major topic on the 4th SPD's agenda has been the cooperation and peaceful use of outer space.

All issues and topics covered by the 4th SPD fall in line with the committee's main goals of international corporation, independent nations, and peaceful relations.

Background:

The West Bank is a portion of land east of Israel, an area that an estimated three million Palestinians call home. In 1967, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt fought Israel in what was known as the "Six Day War," resulting in Israel taking the West Bank from Jordan in six days (1). Although many Palestinians and the international community consider the West Bank to be Palestinian land, Israel currently holds the West Bank and has allowed Jewish settlers to move in.

For Jews, the West Bank is sacred ground, holding many holy sites that Jewish people did not previously have access to. However, the Palestinians who originally occupied the West Bank are currently living under Israeli military administration and have been prohibited by Israel to return to their homes- a situation that many feel is unfair and unjust.

It is also important to note that within the West Bank is the city of Jerusalem, a major point of controversy for both Israel and Palestine. Jerusalem is sacred to the religious traditions of both Judaism and Islam, the predominant religions of Israel and Palestine, respectively. Jerusalem holds the holiest ground in Judaism and serves as Islam's third-holiest shrine (2). Because Israel currently occupies the West Bank, Israel claims Jerusalem to be its capital, while Palestine claims East Jerusalem as the capital for a future Palestinian state.

Since 1967, Israel has begun establishing settlements in the West Bank, in addition to the over 600,000 Jews that now occupy the area. As reported by the advocacy organization Peace Now, the Jewish population in the West Bank increased 21% from 2009 to 2015 (3).

In more recent years, Palestinians have been increasingly oppressed by Israel's restrictions that have been implemented in the West Bank. The West Bank is patrolled by Israeli militia and armed soldiers that have been accused of detainment and torture of Palestinians. In 2016, Mekorot, an Israeli water company, prohibited water access and supply to Palestinians in the Northern West Bank (4). Additionally, between 2003 and 2013, Israel denied citizenship to half of all Palestinian applicants in Eastern Jerusalem (5). The most recent example of Israel's obstruction of human rights is shown through the Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes in July 2019. It is important to note that these are just a handful of examples of the varying human rights abuses ongoing in the West Bank, in addition to lacking Palestinian legal rights, cases of child labor, and travel restrictions for Palestinians (6).

While Palestinians are the major group that is subjected to human rights abuses, terrorist groups such as the Hamas inflict harm upon Israelis. Although Hamas is the ruling organization in the Gaza Strip, an area in West Israel, as of late 2018, the Islamist terrorist organization has begun launching attacks in the West Bank (7). Hamas is openly anti-semitic and organizes anti- Jewish

propaganda on TV, launches missiles to Israel, and conducts suicide bombings. Most monetary aid given to the region is intercepted by Hamas and diverted to their war efforts as opposed to the rebuilding of homes and schools in Israel (8).

Since the conflict's origins, peace talks have been organized between Israel in Palestine. In 1993, the Oslo accord was signed by the two sides and planned for Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (9). By 2000, Israel still held the West Bank and a majority of land with continued fighting, despite attempted compromise. 2010's peace talks broke down when Israel stated it would continue to construct settlements in the West Bank, leaving the conflict still unresolved today (10).

United Nations Involvement:

The most significant political involvement from the United Nations in regards to the Israel-Palestine conflict was the Security Council's passing of Resolution 242. Here, the Security Council called up Israel to remove its military from the land it gained during a 1967 war with Egypt and Syria, as well as to cede this territory (11). The United Nations General Assembly has been more active in the protection of human rights, however, has been accused by Israel for being biased towards Palestinians (12).

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Water and Sanitation took note of the destruction of Palestinian water infrastructure as well as demolitions and attacks towards the group (13). The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) contributes aid in the form of education, health care, and infrastructure works for specifically Palestine refugees (14). The UNRWA works in five areas of the Middle East, including the West Bank. In the State of Palestine, the World Food Program (WFP) provides food insecure areas with electronic vouchers to allow individuals to buy food and also works towards nutrition awareness (15).

It is important to note that UN resolutions are not binding but serve as more of a symbolic message when proposed during times of conflict. It is for this reason that UN resolutions have played a small role in political solutions as the actual implementation of these resolutions is up to the states of Israel and Palestine.

Bloc Positions:

Western Bloc: Countries in this bloc are notably more developed and more likely to be able to give aid, in either finances or supplies, to the conflict region. A nation of great significance in this bloc is the United States, who is Israel's biggest ally and utilizes its veto powers in the Security Council to block condemnations of Israel. Most countries in the EU support a two-state

solution, where Israel and Palestine both receive land through compromise. Israel has increased its weapons from EU manufacturers, with the UK, France, and Germany being three of the world's biggest arms dealers.

Latin America and Caribbean Bloc: Nations in this bloc are typically less involved with the Israel- Palestine conflict because of domestic issues. However, nations such as Venezuela, Mexico, and Colombia have voiced support for a two-state solution through the passing of UN Security Council resolutions calling upon Israel to stop its West Bank settlements and acts of aggression.

African Bloc: African countries tend to be handling their own domestic issues and typically do not possess the capabilities to provide foreign aid. A country to take note of in the African bloc is Egypt, who has been involved with the Israel-Palestine conflict because of its geographical proximity. Egypt's relations with Israel have been notably back and forth due to the fact that some name Egypt as "Israel's closest ally" in the Middle East, while a line of Egypt's Presidents has pledged to not visit the nation until Palestine is recognized as a state.

Asia-Pacific Bloc: Countries in the Asia-Pacific bloc, besides China, tend to play a small role in the West Bank conflict because of extreme poverty and varying domestic issues. As China is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, it has seen general passage of the Council's resolutions for the halting of Israeli settlements as well as a two-state solution. Malaysia has stated that SC Resolution 2334, which called upon Israel to stop the construction of settlements in the West Bank, was a "victory for the people of Palestine," showing where a majority of nations in this bloc stand (16).

Basic Solutions:

Because the West Bank is a major point of controversy in the greater Israel-Palestine conflict, it is important to prepare solutions that address the several sides of this multifaceted issue. The safeguarding of human rights should be carefully looked at, as basic needs such as water and sanitation, legal rights, and shelter can rarely be found for Palestinians in the West Bank. Israeli safety from the terrorist group Hamas need to be addressed- more creative solutions will discuss the diversion of international aid to Hamas war efforts and the groups' bombings in Israel. Peace talks will be considered a more basic solution, especially as these have proven ineffective in successful compromise in the past. For sustainable peace in the West Bank, the relationship between Arabs and Jews can also be touched upon, as anti-semitism and general hatred between the two groups is another factor into the collapse of peace talks. Israel's settlements in the West Bank have caused Palestine to walk away from a previous peace agreement and should be taken as an issue that needs to safeguard human rights and prevent the

displacement of thousands of Israelis, as well as protect Palestinian autonomy. Delegates must understand their country's position on the Israel-Palestine conflict and should have a country policy on whether their nation is for a two-state or one-state solution. The fate of Jerusalem is a major point of contention in the West Bank and should be considered when developing political solutions.

Questions to Consider:

1. What steps should be taken to protect the millions of individuals residing in the West Bank?
2. How do Israel and Palestine view Jerusalem and what strategies can be implemented to ensure a fair compromise?
3. How can Hamas and the Israeli militia in the West Bank be prevented from infringing upon Israeli and Palestinian human rights?
4. What are the main factors behind failed peace talks and what might be successful in the future?
5. How should Israel's settlements in the West Bank be handled?

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