

**Oasis International School Model United Nations**

**Security Council**

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**Guiding Package**

**Topic 2:** Rebuilding Security and combatting terrorism in the Mena Region

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1. **Abstract:**

Since the 16th century, the Kurds have been crying out to the world to get their own independent country as they are divided among four countries in the Middle East. The Kurds are a group of Sunni Muslims who lived during the era of the beginning of Islam but sided against the prophet once and lost their identity as Arabs. They count to almost 35 million roaming around the area know by the Kurds as Kurdistan. This territory is a part of Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria,

The Kurds are being attacked by all four countries but sometimes fight alongside them against common enemies such as the Islamic State (ISIS). The Kurds were massacred in the era of Sadam Hussein’s rule and by the Iranian forces by the day. The Syrian attacks aren’t as harmful as other countries, knowing that the Syrian government is dealing with a civil war and they frequently battle together against ISIS. Thus, the country, making the bigger the damage to the Kurds nowadays is Turkey in the Erdogan era as he battles them ruthlessly with operations killing thousands of them.

The countries, continuous attacks and the Kurds four fronts of battle put the Kurds on the weak side of the war until support came from superpowers such as the United States of America who continuously support the Kurds. Israel has also provided political support and pushes for an independent Kurdistan.

1. **Introduction:**

The Kurds are the biggest ethnic group in the world without a country and the fourth biggest ethnic group in the region with around 35 Million Kurdish. They have been on the path to having an independent country since the 16th century. The closer they were to independence was after World War 1 with the fall of the Ottoman Empire, they were later denied independence by Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey in the Treaty of Sevres in 1920.

 For 34 years, the Kurds have been roaming around the region of the Levant and encountered terrorist groups and governments who chose to reject them as a party. The Kurds have infected the sovereignty of Turkey, Syria and Iraq by trying to combine the territories they control in the three countries to constitute their planned independent country. The Kurds have been fighting in Syria for a long time and actually occupy a large part in the North East of Syria. On this front, the Kurds are facing two threats, the Syrian government and the Islamic State. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have taken a big part in the battle against the Kurds and also battled with the Kurds against the Islamic State.

 Meanwhile, in Iraq, the Kurds have now fought enough to dominate a part of the country in the north while instability ambushed Iraq. Iraq has been one of the countries that made the biggest mark on the Kurds as Sadam Hussein, former president of Iraq, ordered missions that killed the Kurds by thousands. The Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), has been working on securing the Kurdish territories and provide a political presence for them. The People’s Democratic Party (HDP), The People’s Protection Unit (YPG), Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the Democratic Union Party (PYD) have all taken a key role in the battle of the Kurds either militarily or politically.

 On another front, Kurds have had a significant presence in Turkey since 1984 as they launched insurgencies against governments and started coups just like the one in 2015 against Erdogan. The situation between Turkey and the PKK is astonishingly aggressive as attacks by both sides have taken place. A cease-fire occurred in July 2015 between the two sides preventing military acts. However, the cease-fire didn’t prevent the sides from attacking each other politically, since both of them have been accusing each other of the attacks that are originally organized by ISIS.

1. **Definition of Key Terms**[[1]](#footnote-0):
* **Coup:** a sudden, violent, and illegal seizure of power from a government.
* **Political Disputes:** A political dispute is different from a standard dispute. It involves not just disagreements of personality or perspective, but matters that, in the real world, people physically fight over.
* **Referendum:** a general vote by the electorate on a single political question which has been referred to them for a direct decision.
* **Ethnic Group:** a community or population made up of people who share a common cultural background or descent
* **Oppression:** prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or exercise of authority
* **Anfal campaign:** The Anfal genocide was a genocide that killed between 50,000 and 182,000 Kurds. It lasted two years
* **Independence:** the fact or state of being not under control by any other state.

**Background Information:**

Kurds have been denied independence for centuries and have been using different strategies to force their way into it. They have always been on the defensive side militarized. Thus, they use guerrilla warfare strategy in their attacks as they send suicide bombers or kamikaze attacks same as small ambushes directed to key strategic places affecting the moral of the opposition.

Kurds have been formed with their clashes with Turkey as they have experienced all types of conflicts. The Kurds were in military battles against the Turkish, led by Erdogan. The Turkish forces have been striking the Kurds non-stop until now. Although, there was a cease-fire that took place in 2013 preventing any Turkish attacks. Two years later, a suicide bombing suspects by the Islamic State took place killed around thirty Kurds on the Syrian border. The Kurds accused the Turkish for not being able to protect them and marked the end of the cease-fire. The deadliest attack on Turkey by the Kurds was at a peace rally in October 2015 killing around a hundred Turkish citizens.

Kurds have tried to take control politically in certain countries and it seemed possible when they excelled in the parliament of Turkey. It has been temporarily achieved in 2014 as the People’s Democratic Party (HDP) won more than 12% of the votes, forcing Erdogan’s party (AKP) to create a coalition government. The political position of the Kurds increased their power and helped the coup in July 2015 that failed miserably. In the elections of November 2015, the AKP took more than 50% of the votes. In 2016, another coup took place expanding the political divisions even further.

In Iraq, Sadam Hussein ordered genocidal missions against the Kurds killing men, women and children in the process. The era of Sadam Hussein was the most harmful to Kurds as they claim that the Anfal movement took 180 000 Kurdish lives and between 25 000 and 100 000 deaths in the suppression of the 1991 uprising. In 2017, a referendum on the independence of the Kurds even took place. The referendum resulted with 93% voting for the independence of the Kurds, but the government proclaimed the voting as illegal and non-binding.

For Iran, the creation of Kurdistan could be an obstacle if they are to dominate the Middle East with the Shia ideology. They also see the Kurds as Israeli allies who can attack Iran at any point of time. They are also allies with the United States and France, which makes them an addition to the threat of their proxies. Iran is strongly against the Kurds and are battling them politically refusing to give them any grip on the parliament.

In Syria, the situation is more complicated, as the Kurds in Syria are strongly supported by the US, but face two battles on two different fronts at the same time. The Islamic State’s attacks on Syria, occupying territories has been blocked by the Syrian with the support of the Kurds. Despite that, the Kurds have battled the Syrians to control some cities, slowly forming Kurdistan. Syria has been resisting for a long time, especially with the Syrian Democratic Force (SDF) as they are facing a civil war and outside interventions along with the ISIS crisis.

The Kurds have been clashing with Turkey lately, as Erdogan is firing on all of them and not just the ones living in Turkey. The PKK has been performing exquisitely as they have been able to shield the Kurds against considerable threats and evolved their political position. They are now the closest they can be to an independent Kurdistan.

**Major Parties Involved:**

1. ***The Syrian Republic:*** Syria has fought against the Kurds and alongside them against ISIS. Thus, the Kurds are occupying Syrian Territory which was enough to cause a war between the Kurds and Syria.
2. ***The Islamic Republic of Iran:*** Iran is rejecting the idea of the establishment of Kurdistan because of the role they might play against them in their proxies. Moreover, Kurdistan would take a part of Iran’s territory which might oblige Iran to use force to defend their land.
3. ***The Republic of Iraq:*** Iraq has been fighting the Kurds for decades and committed genocidal crimes against them. Iraq refuses the idea of the creation of Kurdistan as it would consume some of their territory. Saddam Hussein, former president of Iraq, planned and implemented the Anfal campaign, the campaign that took the most amount of Kurdish life in history. The Anfal is a campaign by Iraq that was based on aerial attacks against the Kurds and had the objective of eliminating the Kurdish power or even the Kurds in general. The movement killed 182,000 Kurds.
4. ***The Republic of Turkey:***  At the moment, Turkey is the ones hurting the Kurds the most as the Kurds have been trying to settle politically in Turkey. Erdogan is attacking mercilessly the Kurds everywhere and not only inside their borders. The Kurds have been key to the happening of several coups and events that led to troubling the sovereignty of Turkey.
5. ***The United States of America:*** The United States has been supporting continuously the PKK and the Kurds. They are the main supporters to the Kurds and are actually supporting the creation of Kurdistan. Their military support has been crucial as the American weapons are technologically more advanced than the Kurdish opponents, giving them an upper hand in the battle.
6. ***The French Republic:*** The French have only just joined the crisis by supporting the Kurds in March 2018 but will now give the Kurds enough resources to start a country and also win battles which may be the turning point in the war.
7. ***PKK:*** The main organization representing the Kurds and defending them with their own army fighting in different harsh battles with the ultimate goal of creating an independent Kurdistan. They are strongly supported by superpowers such as the United States of America, and Israel gives it a clear superiority in the weapon class in its war.

**UN involvement:**

The UN has started campaigns to support all the collateral damage by providing them with food and medical treatment. Even more, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) ambushed the Islamic State with sanctions all around reducing the threat in Syria. The situation in Iraq has been discussed in 2017 in the UNSC but never found a problem ending solution. The UN also declared their opposition to the independence of the Kurds in September 22, 2017. The UN refused to take part in the referendum in Iraq to decide the decision of the independence. The UN stated this officially with council members “expressing concern over the potentially destabilizing impact of the [Kurdistan](https://www.france24.com/en/tag/kurdistan/) regional government's plans to unilaterally hold a referendum next week”.

**Possible solutions:**

1. Requests the creation an Ad-Hoc committee specialized to address the topic of the Kurdish Crisis.
2. Demands the creation of a sanction if a country is caught sending resources to unofficial groups causing any kind of harm.
3. Condemns any country or official group that supports any side in the war with the ultimate goal of finding its conclusion as soon as possible.
4. Requests the creation of a hotline of communication between the countries involved and the representatives of the PKK in order to create positive relations and paving the way for an agreement over the lengthy kurdish crisis.

**Guiding questions:**

1. Why are Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey refusing the idea of Kurdistan?

2. What side will Kurdistan support if it is to be a country?

3. What might be the opinion of the people about losing territory to an enemy?

4. To what extent Kurds racially abused in the Middle East?

5. How can you give the Kurds a country while not harming other countries?

**Useful links:**

* Anonymous. “Conflict Between Turkey and Armed Kurdish Groups”, available on: <https://www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker#!/conflict/conflict-between-turkey-and-armed-kurdish-groups>. Consulted 18/7/2019
* LONG, Tara. “Who are the Kurds”, available on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uv5-q_9fpro>. Consulted 17/7/2019
* SAEED, Sana. “Why Don’t Syria, Iran, Iraq and Turkey Want a Kurdistan?”, available on: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFQdwNzzTP4. Consulted 18/7/2019](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFQdwNzzTP4)

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1. ANONYMOUS*. “Conflict between Turkey and Armed Kurdish Groups”.* [online]. (4/12/2018). Available on:<https://www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker#!/conflict/conflict-between-turkey-and-armed-kurdish-groups>. Consulted on the 6th of December 2018

2. ANONYMOUS. “*Who are the Kurds”* .[online]. (17/7/2014). Available on:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uv5-q_9fpro>. Consulted on the 7th of December 2018

3. SAEED, Sana. “*Why Don't Syria, Iran, Iraq And Turkey Want A Kurdistan? | AJ+”.*[online]. (14/1/2018). Available on:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFQdwNzzTP4> . Consulted on the 8th of December 2018

1. Google Dictionary [↑](#footnote-ref-0)