

**Oasis International School Model United Nations**

**Historical Security Council**

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**Guiding Package**

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1. **ABSTRACT**

The Persian Gulf War, or simply Gulf War, was an international conflict beginning January 16, 1991 and ending a month later on February 28, 1991. The first post-Cold War crisis was the result of Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait which had the objectives of acquiring the latter’s large oil reserves, as well as solving a large debt that Iraq owed Kuwait and expanding Iraqi power in the region.

Before the invasion, Iraq was still reeling from the events of the Iraq-Iran war in August 1988. While prospects of peace between the two nations seemed bright, two weeks after their peace treaty discussion, Saddam Hussein[[1]](#footnote-0) accused Kuwait of siphoning crude oil from their common border. He also claimed that Kuwait was an “artificial state carved out of the Iraqi coast by Western colonialists”.

The military offensive against Iraq, led by the allied anti-Iraq coalition between the United States and 38 other countries, began attacking the occupation after the United Nations had set a deadline for Iraqi forces to withdraw from Kuwait by January 15th, 1991. The offensives were divided into two operations; Operation Desert Storm and Operation Desert Sabre, the first one consisting of aerial bombardment that destroyed Iraq’s air defenses as well as its communications networks, weapons plants, oil refineries, bridges and roads. The second one was a massive allied ground offensive where Arab and U.S. forces retook Kuwait and destroyed most of Iraq’s elite Republican Guard units. The war ended once former U.S. President George H.W. Bush ordered a cease-fire for February 28, by which Iraqi resistance had already completely collapsed.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

After the Iran-Iraq war between 1980 and 1988, Iraq was extremely indebted to Kuwait for its financial support during the war. Iraq, after losing immense sums of money due to war expenses, as well as suffering great losses such as the destruction of its port facilities which cut off the country’s main trade outlet, found it difficult to repay Kuwait. Because of their deteriorated financial situation, Iraq requested that Kuwait forgive the debt. Iraq claimed that it helped the state during the rise of the Iranian hegemony[[2]](#footnote-1) in Kuwait. However, Kuwait's reluctance to pardon the debt paved the way for the invasion of Kuwait, and the beginning of a strained relationship between the two countries.

Iraq, enraged, invaded Kuwait without warning on August 2, 1990. Saddam Hussein’s army annexed the entire country. Iraq then seized the element of surprise and Kuwait’s unreadiness by killing, jailing and torturing hundreds and thousands of Kuwaitis.

The event then led to a global intervention, involving powerful countries such as The United States Of America, and organizations such as the UN.

Following the invasion of Kuwait and the disruption of global peace, the UN called for an immediate withdrawal from Iraq but the Iraqian president ignored the call, as weeks went by without any reaction from Saddam. In November 1990, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 678, which allowed Saddam six weeks to withdraw its troops before the coalition was authorized to remove Iraq’s armed forces by military means. The six weeks expired on 15th January 1991 with no sign of withdrawal. A day later, air bombings took place, and the Gulf war officially began.

The Gulf War was a short but heated war that took place in 1991. A coalition of more than 35 countries were involved in the conflict, and participated in launching a campaign to revoke the invasion of Kuwait. Around 45,000 British forces were deployed for the war, which set the record for being the largest British army intervention since the Second World War.

1. **DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

1- Annexation: Concept based on the act of acquiring forcibly a state territory, typically done by another state. In 1990, Iraq annexed Kuwait.

2- Sovereignty: Supreme power or authority in the decision making and governance of a state. Kuwaiti sovereignty was violated when Iraq invaded the state.

3- Hegemony: The economic, political or military prevalence of one state over another. Since 1979, Iran has wished for regional hegemony over neighboring regions.

4- Siphoning: Draw off or transfer the oil from a place to another, usually illegally or unfairly. In 1990, Kuwait was accused by Iraq for presumably siphoning oil from Iraqi territory.

5- Crude oil: Unrefined (rough) oil. The dispute over crude oil was the main reason for the invasion of Kuwait and hence, one of the main war triggers.

6- Coalition: A temporary alliance for a combined action. A coalition of more than 35 countries, European, Arab and American, was involved in the Gulf War.

7- Incremental cost: A specific amount of money needed to fund the troops for the war in addition to the money needed to rebuild what was destroyed. The US provided around $54 billion of the incremental cost for the war.

1. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Gulf War treaded its start when Iraq's President, Saddam Hussein, ordered Iraqi forces to invade Kuwait on 2 August 1990. Immediately, his action was condemned by the UN, and the UN applied sanctions on Iraq to force them to leave the state. United States President at the time, George H W Bush[[3]](#footnote-2), ordered the forces in the region under an operation by the name “Operation Desert Shield”. When diplomacy failed, Operation Desert Storm began on the 16th of January, 1991.

Body 1: The Very Beginning - Operation Desert Storm

On January 16, 1991, Operation Desert Storm launched a massive air campaign against Iraq and its armed forces. Since that moment, the coalition has flown more than 100,000 air raids against Iraq for 38 days. The air campaign for that operation was specifically designed and prepared to obstruct communications in Iraq, damage its military forces, and cause a vast amount of stress for Iraqi soldiers.

Body 2: Retaliation

By January 18th, Saddam Hussein sent SCUD[[4]](#footnote-3) missiles to hit Israeli targets, seeking to broaden the war as well as prevent Muslim nations, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, from supporting the coalition and standing against Iraq.

Afterwards, from January 29 to February 1, Saddam sent two mechanized divisions and one armored division to invade Khafji[[5]](#footnote-4) on the Persian Gulf. Using multiple air bombings and armory provided by the coalition, Saudi Arabia, with the help of Qatar, fought back the Iraqi army in the Battle of Khafji.

Body 4: Ground Campaign Launch

It was then, on February 24, that the coalition’s ground campaign officially began. The coalition tricks Iraq at the coast-side of Kuwait, threatening a marine landing, but the actual attack is occurring in-land against Iraqi forces in Kuwait and Iraq. British troops are the first to make an entrance in Iraq. The US set multiple rockets on the Iraqi army whilst bulldozers broke through sand walls along the border between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to help more coalition help and tanks to advance into the war-place.

Body 5: The end; Where to go from there?

Just a day later on the 25th, An Iraqi SCUD missile striked the U.S. military camps at the city of Dhahran in Saudi Arabia, resulting in the killing of 28 U.S. troops and the wounding of almost 100 troops.

1. **MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED**
2. Organizations involved

**1) North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO):** The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military alliance between the United States of America, Canada, and around 30 European allies. The organization was founded following the end of World War II to maintain the peace and political cooperation on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. NATO played a notably important role during the Gulf war in 1991. The organization’s efforts include active coverage of the war field by NATO Airborne Early Warning aircraft as well as deployment of NATO naval forces to deal with any threats to shipping in the Mediterranean.

**2) Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO):** A Palestinian organization established in 1964 representing the Palestinian national movement. The organization aims to liberate Palestine by normalizing the use of violence against Israeli forces. Unlike most Arab states, PLO supported the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein during the Gulf war. Consequently, the organization lost all diplomatic and financial support from Saudi Arabia and all the Gulf states.

1. Countries involved

**1) Republic of Iraq:** Iraq was the main aggressor during the Gulf War. The country debuted the conflict by invading Kuwait and refusing to leave the state, even with global pressure caused by the coalition and its forces. The country’s president at the time, Saddam Hussein, made many decisions during the war that set it to flames. These decisions would later affect Iraq’s growth and its relations with other countries.

**2) State of Kuwait:** Kuwait was the affected party during the war. Since its invasion by Iraq in 1990, the state has been the battlefield during the entirety of the conflict. Seeing as it was utterly unprepared at the time of the invasion, the number of casualties were highly elevated due to most of their resistance being untrained civilians. Kuwait has had support from the coalition forces, which included the United States, The United Kingdom, France, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Kuwait suffered from financial instability post war, mainly because of the destruction caused to its land by military forces.

**3) United States of America:** The US was the leading country in the coalition against Iraq. It sent close to 700,000 forces into Kuwait and showed its support to the country during the UN discussions involving the war.

**4) The Arab Republic of Egypt:** Egypt played an important role in the coalition and in the freeing of Kuwait. The army troops sent by Egypt were the main attacking units during the ground offensive.

**5) Saudi Arabia:** Kuwait’s neighboringcountry served as a sanctuary for the Kuwaiti president when the invasion first hit. Being another country with large oil reserves, Saudi Arabia was threatened by Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait as it meant that it could target it next. It offered aid and support to Kuwait during the entirety of the war, notably sending close to 100,000 forces into the war.

**6) The United Kingdom:** The UK was another important country in the coalition. It offered military support to Kuwait in the form of servicemen and women and vehicles. The British military troops sent out to Kuwait were the most deployed since the Second World War.

**7) Germany:** Not only did Germany participate in the coalition force with some of its troops, it also covered $16 billion from the whopping $61 billion incremental cost of the war.

1. **UN INVOLVEMENT**

The United Nations’ got involved multiple times over the course of the Gulf war. On the 2nd of August 1990, right after Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed a resolution denouncing the invasion and demanding Iraq’s withdrawal from Kuwait. 4 days later, the council imposed trade and financial sanctions on Iraq for not obeying the previously mentioned resolution. On August 8th, after Iraq announced its formal annexation of Kuwait, the UN passed a resolution declaring the annexation null, illegal and void. On the 29th of November 1990, due to Iraq’s unresponsiveness to its resolutions, the UNSC permitted the use of “all necessary means” of force against the Republic of Iraq if the country did not withdraw from the state of Kuwait by January 15 1991. Given the country ignored the warning and refused to withdraw, The UN authorized the coalition’s entry into the war.

1. **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

* Implement a ceasefire treaty between both parties.
* Demand Iraq’s immediate retreat from Kuwaiti land.
* Condemn Iraqi government for breaching the UN charter articles against invasion of another country.
* Demand full incremental cost for damage and destruction caused by Iraq in Kuwait.
* Apply sanctions on the Republic of Iraq to regulate the country’s relations with its neighbors for peace.

1. **GUIDING QUESTIONS**

* What position did your country have during this conflict?
* What could the UN have done differently?
* How was your country supporting each party?
* How would you have implemented peace-keeping solutions during this tense period of history?
* How was this conflict significant in history?

1. **USEFUL LINKS**

* <https://edition.cnn.com/2013/09/15/world/meast/gulf-war-fast-facts/index.html>
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wxj-xCiiay0>
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FUYsTGgx9A>
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdxkWTYKYCE>
* <https://warontherocks.com/2020/09/the-gulf-war-30-years-later-successes-failures-and-blind-spots/>
* <https://getrevising.co.uk/grids/gulf-war-1990-causes-and-effects>

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* United Nations Security Council. “Security Council Resolution 660”. August 2, 1990. Available on: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/660> . Consulted on the 31st of August 2021.

1. Iraqi politician who served as the fifth President of Iraq from 1979 to 2003 [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. Definition of key terms [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. American diplomat and politician who served as the 41st president of the United States from 1989 to 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. A series of ballistic missiles used for tactical strategies developed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics during the Cold War. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. Town on the border between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)