

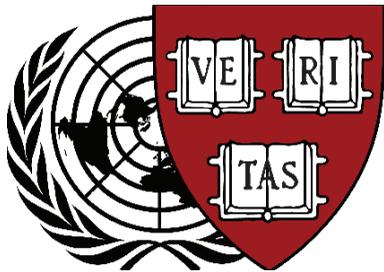
Background Guide in Brief

for the

*United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organi-
zation, 1991-1995*

Harvard Model United Nations China

March 21- 24, 2019



Harvard Model United Nations China

A LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON BACKGROUND GUIDES IN BRIEF

Dear Delegates,

Welcome once more to Harvard Model United Nations China 2019! The entire Staff and Secretariat of HMUN could not be more excited to see you in person in Beijing in a few short weeks.

By now, you have most likely begun preparing for HMUN China 2019. Preparing for a Model UN conference can be intimidating, but our team is committed to providing you with the support and resources that you will need to succeed. In keeping with that mission, this year at HMUN China we are piloting a new resource—the Background Guide in Brief.

Background Guides are intended to outline the major issues and ideas that delegates will have to confront in the committee room. However, reading the Guide can also be intimidating for delegates without prior experience in English-language Model UN, or MUN in general. To help all delegates succeed, we have asked your Director to create an abbreviated version of your committee's Guide, enclosed in the following pages.

We hope that this Background Guide in Brief provides a helpful overview of your topic. That being said, your preparation should not end with this document. We encourage you to also read the full Background Guide, which goes into much greater detail and includes the full bibliographical documentation of our Directors' work. Full Guides also contain useful information on committee expectations and procedure, and you should use it as a resource now and at conference. In short, consider what you learn from the Background Guide in Brief to be a launching point for further research—be sure to take advantage of the time you have to prepare for conference as best you can, and feel free to reach out to your committee Directors with additional questions.

Thank you once again for choosing to participate at HMUN China 2019! We are beyond excited for conference, and look forward to welcoming you in Beijing in a few weeks.

Sincerely,

Anthony Bogachev

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Harvard Model United Nations 2019

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Introduction

The year is 1991, and, as the once-prospering nation of Yugoslavia has been plunged into war by explosive and brutal expressions of powerful, bottled-up nationalism, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization now finds itself discussing ways it can salvage the region's cultural heritage. In this small country, one can find Venetian coastal ports, Central-European reminiscent cities, and Ottoman villages in the mountains in less than a 150-mile radius from one another. The wars which engulf Yugoslavia in the 1990s, though, threaten to erase much of this history; one only needs to view pictures of the shelling of Dubrovnik's marble alleyways and red rooftops, the bombing of Sarajevo's narrow-alleyed Turkish Quarter, or the destruction of Mostar's famous Stari Most as examples of the devastation this war has unleashed upon Yugoslavia's heritage. Proceeding from the wars' inception in 1991 to their end in 1995, these sessions of UNESCO will attempt to formulate a plan for saving one of the world's most dynamic, diverse, and beautiful histories.

Committee Structure

Our committee will function just like a regular resolution-based committee, except with one key modification. Instead of spending all six sessions building up to one final resolution, we will be working on two or three "mini-resolutions", which will be smaller and more focused than the regular resolutions found in an ECOSOC committee. These "mini-resolutions" will facilitate our ability to "time-travel" from 1991 through 1995 over the course of the weekend - once we pass our first "mini-resolution," we will move two years ahead into the future to grapple with the potential consequences of that policy approved by committee. This fast-paced format will also feature crisis elements as well. For more information about this format, please consult the full background guide.

History of the Topic

In the twentieth century, the idea of a united and independent Yugoslavia was a relatively new one, with the Balkan Peninsula long having been dominated by many foreign empires - Illyrian, Roman, Byzantine, Venetian, Serb, Bulgar, Ottoman, and Austro-Hungarian, to name a few. It was only after the Austrian and Ottoman defeat in World War I that the South Slavic inhabitants of the Balkans decided to unite under one, independent flag. However, tensions soon escalated between Serbs and Croats, Yugoslavia's two most populous groups, culminating in the political marginalization of the Croats by the Serb-dominated pre-World War II monarchy, and the subsequent atrocities waged against the Serbs during the war itself by the Nazi-supported Ustaša regime in Croatia. Although the postwar socialist regime of Josip Broz Tito largely alleviated this situation, ethnic tension would soon rise again in the late 1980s during the rise of nationalist politicians such as the Serb leader Slobodan Milošević and the Croat Franjo Tuđman. While the former more or less advocated for a "Greater Serbia," the latter pushed for Croatian independence from Yugoslavia, and the irreconcilable nature of these two desires compelled the Serbs and Croats to wage war on one another in a conflict known as the Croatian War of Independence.

Current Situation

The current war is a complicated and nuanced conflict, yet we will focus on its impact on the cultural heritage of the Yugoslav region. At this stage in the war, there are two regions which are the primary arenas of the war, Dalmatia, and Central Croatia. Dalmatia, Croatia's coastal area, has a long and fascinating history filled with Roman and Venetian influence, as seen through Roman palaces in Split and Venetian-esque fortresses along the Adriatic Sea, of which the most famous example is Dubrovnik. However,

as Serb armies invade this region, many of these coastal ports have come under siege, with the Siege of Dubrovnik being particularly notorious for its shelling of the city's medieval old town. The situation is similarly bleak in Central Croatia (Slavonia), where many of Croatia's most beautiful national parks such as Plitvice Lakes are located. These national parks have sadly become front-lines for clashes between Serb and Croat forces. Also affected in this region have been the Hapsburg-era cities of Slavonia, such as Vukovar, victim to the haunting destruction caused by the horrific Siege of Vukovar.

Bloc Positions & Past International Actions

As for international stances on this issue, the U.S.-led NATO bloc has been somewhat supportive of the Croats while Russia favors the Serbs; this is perhaps due to common religious affiliations. Within Europe, the United Kingdom and France advocate for a more laissez-faire approach to the conflict, while the Germans push for more involvement in support of Croatian independence. Non-aligned actors display a variety of outlooks - some, such as China, favor the Serbs, while others, particularly Islamic nations, support the Muslim Bosniaks also threatened by this conflict. Due to these wide-ranging international opinions, past international actions to the conflict have been limited to a few Security Council resolutions calling for armistice, peacekeeping, humanitarian aid, and an arms embargo.

Questions to Be Answered in a Resolution

In your resolutions you should consider the following questions:

1. How can UNESCO best strive to put a halt to the destruction currently being unleashed upon Dubrovnik and other cultural heritage sites (whether UNESCO-designated or not) currently affected by the Croatian War of Independence?
2. How can UNESCO place extra protection on sites not currently affected by the conflict?
3. Should UNESCO operate under a separate protocol for dealing with sites of religious heritage or of environmental beauty?
4. What special measures are necessary for UNESCO to take (in addition to those already prescribed) to preserve intangible aspects of culture?
5. How can UNESCO ensure the safety of any individuals or crews it sends to potentially monitor sites in wartime regions?
6. What types of heritage preservation should UNESCO prioritize over others, if any?
7. How can UNESCO maintain political and religious neutrality while operating in wartime situations such as the Yugoslav Wars?

This Background Guide in Brief is not meant to provide an exhaustive introduction to the topic. Please consult the full Background Guide on the HMUN China website, which also includes citations for the material in this document.