



# UNSC

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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# TOPIC A:

## WATER CRISIS IN GAZA

**DISCLAIMER:** Both Topic A & B were written over the summer, months before the events that took place in the month of October. Understanding that both topics are still ongoing, updates will be sent out closer to the conference in March!

The conflict between Israel and Palestine has been covered extensively in many different Model United Nations conferences. Using an environmental justice lens, this committee hopes to view the conflict through the Water Crisis in Gaza, an issue that has generally zero media attention and has grown into one of the largest humanitarian crises of the modern century. Less than five percent of the water in the Gaza Strip, a contested territory in Palestine, is safe for human consumption. With roughly two million citizens living on land that stretches just 25 miles long, the density issue only exacerbates the scarcity of freshwater available for the citizens in Gaza. Most families rely on drinking water that is brought in by private vendors at extremely inflated prices, causing disparities in access to natural resources across various income brackets. Much of the crisis is a result of an inability to fix the deteriorating sanitation infrastructure, which delegates will have to navigate as they work together to figure out how to give help to those who need it most in a territory that has been contested for decades.

This topic carries great importance as it highlights an often overlooked product of conflict: the blockage of and lack of safe access to water and sanitation, which is a direct violation of human rights. This water crisis specifically is the byproduct of decades of inequitable wartime measures and agreement, and the consistent overlooking of this aspect of the greater Israel-Palestine conflict, making it vital that we focus on it here. Lastly, it serves as a reminder of the irreversible environmental impacts an overpopulated region at war faces.

For one to fully grasp the urgency of the water crisis in Gaza, it is important to understand the historical significance of territorial disputes in the area, the rapid industrial-

ization that has contributed to the pollution of the water, the wars that have created disputes over access to resources, and the role that politics play for humans rights issues. Researching these different aspects will give context to the current situation that is not only affecting the Gaza Strip, but Israel and Egypt as well.

For example, is access to clean and safe drinking water a human right? How has war contributed to ethnic, religious, and territorial disputes and further contributed to the lack of access to safe water? How have Israel's strict sanctions on imports and Palestine's lack of independence made it difficult for the Palestinian people to update their water infrastructure? What implications for pandemics and diseases does unsafe drinking water have for Palestine and its surrounding countries? What solutions and resolutions do you plan to implement, navigating a territory that has been disputed for nearly a century?

As you do your research, make sure to take note on ethnic tensions in the region and how they impact the environmental justice movements in the area. Beyond this being an issue about territorial disputes and imports, it is also an issue of human rights and what constitutes safe and healthy living. Be sure to think of solutions that are applicable across territories and can help mitigate the issues in the Gaza strip and beyond.



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## TOPIC B: OPEN AGENDA

The UNSC deals with international issues as they begin to grow and manifest in the global community. As a result, the Security Council is an avenue for delegates to choose their issue to discuss. As suggested by the name, Open Agenda implies that delegates can pick any topic of their choosing. That being said, we have prepared a few topics that we believe are relevant and important to the current international community..

The first suggested topic is the Taliban Rule of Afghanistan, an issue that has persisted since the first Taliban takeover in 1997. The conflicts began early in the late 70s when Soviet forces attempted to strengthen communist efforts in Afghanistan. Warlords grew popular at this time, coming together to push out Soviet forces creating a largely Pushtun-dominated military known as the Taliban. Throughout the last three decades, the United States has played a pivotal role in both mitigating and aggravating the conflict. After three years of Taliban rule, the United States invaded the country in 2001 and was able to help support a democratic election in Afghanistan. Shortly after, the Taliban reemerged, sparking the first-ever NATO attempt to support the Afghanistan military as it suppressed the Taliban insurrection. The United States stayed in Afghanistan for nearly a decade until President Biden withdrew all troops in 2021. As a result of a lack of military support in the region, the Taliban was able to assume control and has spent the last two years stripping the rights of women and basic humanitarian rights for all peoples. As you begin to draft solutions and do research on this topic, keep in mind how Afghanistan might be able to maintain its independence and democracy. What role should other countries play in supporting Afghanistan's humanitarian needs? How can Afghanistan maintain its sovereignty as it strives for improvements in women's rights and education?

Next, throughout Sudan's 67 years of independence, war has been common for the country. However, the most recent coup d'état removed its leader, Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir, and has created a new kind of crisis that emphasizes the instability in the government. There are also major geopolitical implications because of its location, size, natural resources, and rapidly increasing refugee crisis. Both of the figures sought power control capable armies, with Hemedti leading the Rapid Support Forces and Al-Burhan leading the Sudanese Armed Forces. The failure towards a civilian-led government is what created the environment necessary for the power struggle to thrive and its development is a primary step in the stability of Sudan. These two forces have been fighting to take over the capitol, Khartoum, to retain military control. When looking at this conflict, it is important to take note of how foreign powers, especially those outside of the continent, should be involved, as even though their influence is necessary for humanitarian aid, there is also a lot of room for powers like the United Arab Emirates and Russia to abuse the tragedies to expand their already existing influence in the region. Additionally, openness to international involvement needs to consider the implications on the surrounding nations. Also, delegates should explore how to build long-term stability for a country that has spent much of its history in crisis, despite having the resources to be one of the wealthiest nations on the continent.

Lastly, the Russian invasion of the Ukraine in early 2022 marked an act of violent expansionism not seen in Eastern Europe in the recent decades, sparking global distraught given its danger of forcing some of the world's most powerful countries into war. Unlike the other topics brought forward for this simulation of the Security Council, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has had a notable amount of media coverage since its initial invasion, which has successfully put pressure onto outside nations to take action. When looking into the crisis, it is important to observe the influence of outside nations, including the threat of bringing in NATO nations if one of the member states is attacked. Other questions include: how can the United Nations Security Council provide support despite Russia's veto power? How should the committee address the refugee crisis, given East Europe's already existing hostility to refugees and the consequences that increased refugee populations can have on Ex-Soviet nations? How can it mitigate the effects taken on global trade?