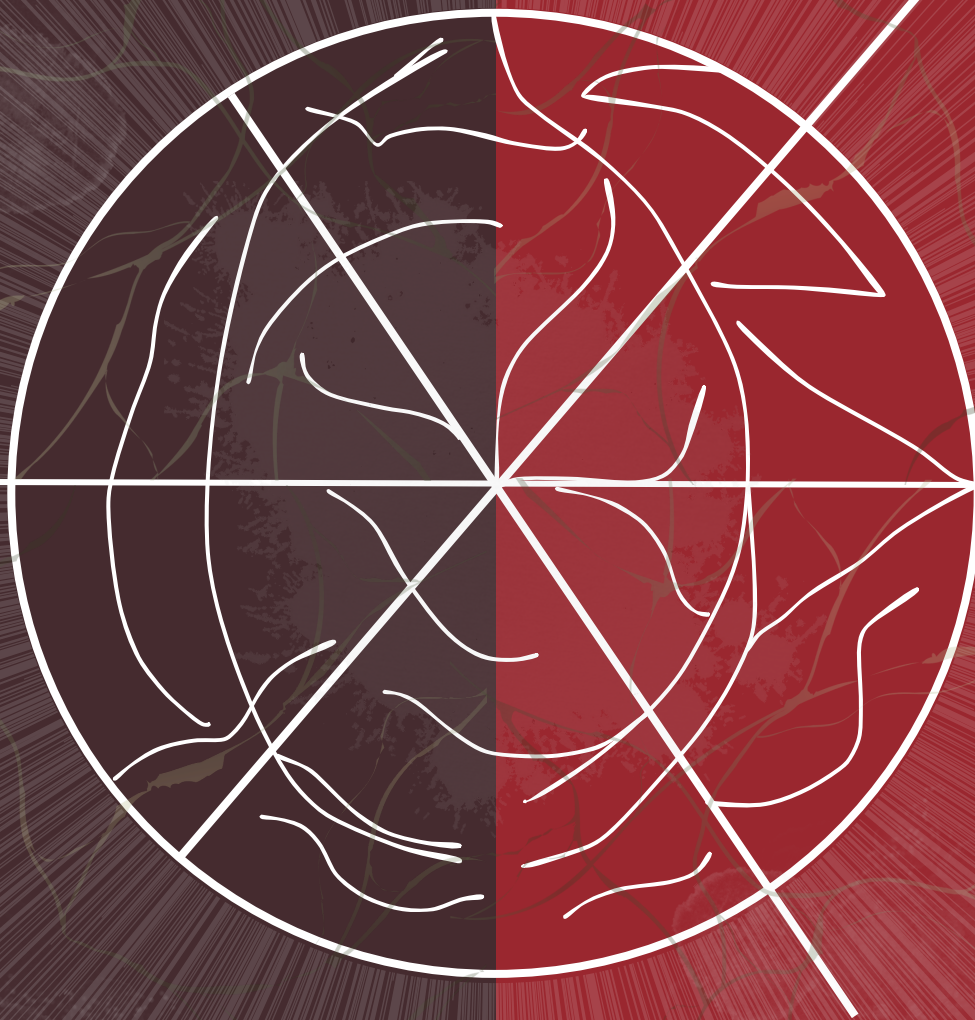


**GIMUN  
JOURNAL  
2025**



**GIMUN**

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**Navigation Global Conflicts:  
Fostering Peace Through Multilateral  
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# Reviewing and Strengthening the Vienna Declaration to Address Human Rights Violations in the Middle East

*Polina Telepova*

Being an intergovernmental body composed of 47 member states, the distinguished United Nations Human Rights Council stands for values of promotion and protection of human rights around the world, meeting at the United Nations' Office in Geneva. The Universal Periodic Review is a mechanism created by the UNHRC to conduct an evaluation of UN member states' behavior towards international human rights law, is only one of many actions done to protect vulnerable groups, combat racism and defend fundamental freedoms.

To initiate the further development of this article, it is essential to grasp the history of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA). In June 1993 at the World Conference on Human Rights, global efforts were unified to promote human rights, deducing a major necessity for a renewed allegiance to human rights, involving the international community and not just national borders. For no state should be capable of using cultural, religious, or political justifications to excuse human rights abuses, especially in countries with uneven progress compared to their neighbors', suffering from authoritarianism and violation of civil and political rights.

During this GIMUN Annual Conference of 2025, the geographical location of our honorable delegates' discussions is the Middle East, where decades of raging authoritarianism have encompassed armed conflict, censorship of any kind of opposition and use of lethal chemical weapons. Along with these persevering challenges, numerous humanitarian crises can be added, mass displacement of civilians, high unemployment rates and widespread poverty due to heavy vulnerable reliance on oil exportations.



Sponsoring the one and only labored resolution paper of this committee, delegations of Italy and India, along with multiple signatories, through spirited arguments aimed to tackle the topic by reinforcing regional justice mechanisms, concocting the following ideas : Composed of 3 justices from the ICC, and of 3 delegates chosen by the High Commissioner of the UNHCR, a

special commission will verify the respect of Human Rights within the Middle East, in order to protect the rights of liberty of opinion and expression, and to protect vulnerable groups such as women, children, and ethnic minorities. The resolution paper advocates as well for NGOs to protect human rights defenders and to publish regular reports on the situation of

human rights in the countries concerned, to lead investigations on the ongoing condition of women's rights in the Middle East, specifically in main regions where the UN Women calls attention for. The resolution incentivizes for the UNHRC to persist with its efforts in providing support, protection for refugees fleeing armed conflict, to provide goods of first necessity and for all member states to provide humanitarian aid, collaborating with UNICEF concerning education, because it is only through education that future generations will be able to put an end to decades of ongoing armed conflicts.

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# To surveil or not to surveil? That is the question

*Jim Au Yeung*

In 2013, Edward Snowden, a former analyst and private contractor at the National Security Agency of the United States of America, shocked the world when he decided to leak a vast amount of classified documents on how the United States maintains an extensive international surveillance network, all hidden from public sight.

These leaked documents revealed that the United States has been tapping into and collecting information from almost every phone call in the country, and exposed how the US government had secret backdoors to collect user information from tech giants such as Yahoo and Facebook, even though these internet companies boast data protection and security with



end-to-end encryption. More seriously, these documents also exposed that the US government has been surveilling other governments, as well as accessing internal communications of international organisations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

This whistleblowing incident, known as the Snowden Revelations, sparked a heated debate across the world, as it is unexpected that the United States, a country that is seen as the pillar

of human rights, personal liberty and democracy, would have such an established surveillance network that had other countries done the same, they would have been condemned as “authoritarian” and a “human rights abuse”.

It also raised concern on government power, authority oversight and state transparency, and how far governments should go to intrude in people’s lives in the name of national security.

In the international context, there have been many agreements on data protection and personal privacy. Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reads: “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.”

In 1996, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, where “the right to privacy” is explicitly enshrined. It reads: “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence.” The ICCPR is legally-binding on its signatory states, which currently comprises 174 full state parties and 6 signatories.

In 2017, the United Nations Human Right Council adopted its first resolution that addresses “the right to privacy in the digital age”, to tackle challenges posed by the rise of Artificial



Intelligence and Big Data, and calls on all countries to ensure compliance to human rights policies in their surveillance practices.

According to a report from the Office of the High Commissioner of the United Nations for Human Rights in 2021, it stresses the increasing need for the right to privacy to be upheld in the digital age due to the rising use of AI systems, increased monitoring of public spaces

and the development of financial encryption technologies.

To surveil or not to surveil? That is the question, and in this year's Annual Conference, delegates work together in search of an agreement on how much the government should intrude into the people's privacy while upholding national security.

A majority of delegates agreed that some form of digital control and surveillance is necessary to safeguard national security, and that surveillance protects the stability of the state. A basic understanding was reached within the UNHRC.

However, the committee was unable to proceed further on this topic due to time constraints, resulting from a prolonged debate session on the previous topic on strengthening the Vienna Declaration to address human rights issues in the Middle East. Therefore, no resolutions were adopted by the council before the meeting was suspended.

In 2022, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a report that warned the people's privacy is coming under even greater pressure in the digital age, where spyware has been increasingly found deployed in mobile devices. Surveillance tools have become more sophisticated that even our smartphones can become surveillance devices. The OHCHR is now calling for urgent actions to be taken by governments



worldwide against the proliferation of surveillance technologies. The UNHRC, as the core committee for human rights, has a role to play in safeguarding the public's privacy.



# Increasing the resilience of cities to natural disasters

*Jade Foret*

A hurricane in Mayotte, earthquakes in Haiti, fires in Los Angeles, and even earthquakes in Taiwan: these significant natural disasters are proof the world needs to take action to protect its population. We tend to view these phenomena as "natural" disasters. However, it appears that their impacts are worsened by today's anthropogenic activities, rather than by nature itself. Moreover, their impact on our societies varies a lot based on the way Man handles them. This article aims to explore the parameters involved in our societies' risk management, as each



country's responsibility is at stake, particularly that of so-called developed countries.

According to the UN, resilience can be defined as “the ability of a system, a community, or a society facing hazards, to resist absorb, adapt, and recover from the effects of a form of danger in an opportune and efficient way, particularly by saving and rebuilding its structures and essential basic functions”

(Disaster Risk and Resilience, 2012). Indeed, several examples show that the way societies deal with natural disasters by creating resilient spaces is a crucial issue to save lives and infrastructures. One proof of this could be cyclone Sidr, which hit Bangladesh and India in 2008: while India, with its anticyclonic infrastructures, mourned one deceased, 3,000 victims were counted in Bangladesh.

The resilience of countries against natural disasters is a topic that many international organisations have studied in order to remedy the lack of preparation. The objectives the European Commission has set rest on five pillars: anticipating, preparing, alerting, reacting and protecting. These goals aim to help authorities of European countries make better-informed decisions and to protect citizens, livelihoods and the environment (European Commission, 2021).

This subject is all the more relevant since the scale of these phenomena keeps getting bigger as humanity develops industrially. According to the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters of the University of Louvain, all 396 disasters recorded in 2019 have resulted in more than 11,000 deaths, affected 95 million people and caused 103 billion dollars of economic loss. A natural disaster can set a country back in terms of development, and some populations are particularly vulnerable to these phenomena because of the frequency, especially in certain regions of the world.



Countries' resilience has been debated in 2020 during a discussion about the Paris Agreement. The members have agreed on the need to reinforce resilience against climate change, with particular attention to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable countries. However, the objectives have not yet been achieved and countries are struggling to anticipate the disasters that follow these natural phenomena, as witnessed with the Chido cyclone that hit Mayotte on 14 December 2024, as well as the political and social management that followed.

This was the first topic debated by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. The different delegations have shared their perspective on the need for an international collaboration and on the preferred means to improve the resilience.

All countries have agreed on the need for international action and have insisted on individual responsibility in the face of these disasters. The most vulnerable ones, such as Haiti, cannot act alone, and without international aid the most disadvantaged populations lack the necessary resources to face those risks.

The points of contention lie in the optimal means of assuming this responsibility. Mexico emphasized the role of the private sector, investments, and new technologies—artificial intelligence, for instance—in risk management. Other countries, such as Germany, stressed the necessity of engaging in social work. Germany maintains that a city cannot be considered resilient unless the social aspect and the management of population needs are ensured.

Several motions were discussed during the debates. The Netherlands submitted a motion on "urban planning and the improvement of infrastructure for city resilience." South Korea proposed reconsidering current urban planning to foster greater cooperation between local and international organizations. The



United Arab Emirates, in contrast, highlighted the role of businesses and private investment in strengthening city resilience. The Netherlands concluded the motion by outlining key challenges: equality, fund allocation, and organization and innovation in urban planning to enhance resilience.

The discussions then shifted toward solutions. The Netherlands recognized the importance of technology and artificial intelligence in disaster risk management. They also highlighted the main challenges: the development gap between developed countries and countries experiencing poverty. They called for collaboration among all nations. Haiti reiterated that this was a matter of survival for the country. Nations often tend to repair, rebuild, and respond after disasters, whereas risk reduction must be addressed from a preventive perspective.

Reducing poverty is essential to establishing effective risk management frameworks and adapted infrastructure.

Finally, the United Arab Emirates emphasized the time-sensitive nature of disaster risks. "We no longer have the luxury of time!" they declared. It is crucial to utilize the knowledge and technology already available and to work with local organizations to implement tailored solutions for each context. These measures must be internationally funded and recognized as one of the key challenges of our time.

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# Combating violations of labour rights in the workplace in global supply chains

*Polina Telepova*

More than a century ago, in the aftermath of the First World War in 1919, the International Labour Organization was created to safeguard international labour standards, resulting in winning the Nobel Peace Prize (1969) for its efforts to improve working conditions, promoting social protection and worker's rights. Being one of the oldest agencies of the



United Nations, through decades it has supervised and stood by its moral values, establishing conventions such as: **Forced Labour Convention, 1930** (No. 29) - Prohibits all forms of forced or compulsory labor; **Discrimination Convention, 1958** (No. 111) - prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation; **Minimum Age Convention, 1973** (No. 138) - Sets the minimum age for employment to prevent child

labor.

The organisation of the ILO is presented as follows: Article 2 of ILO's Constitution :

- a. a General Conference of representatives of the Members
- b. a Governing Body
- c. an International Labour Office controlled by the Governing Body

The ILO's governance is based on a tripartite system, ensuring balanced cooperation between governments, employers, and workers, where all have a voice in decision-making.

The ex-Prime Minister of Togo, Gilbert F. Hounbo, was elected by the ILO's Governing Body as the Organization's 11th Director-General, becoming the first African to hold the position. He is focusing his mandate on promoting greater social justice, fighting inequalities and discrimination in the world of work, and achieving better working conditions both through national action and by building more effective multilateral coordination and leadership.

Throughout the entire week of the GIMUN Annual Conference of 2025, fiery debates and numerous moderated caucuses were held, and delegates engaged in dialogue to tackle the problem of labor rights violations from its roots. Several delegations, such as the USA, Brazil, UAE, and the German Trade Union Confederation reached consensus on issues regarding



overconsumption and capitalism feeding off vulnerable populations - victims of war or collapsing economy. Wealthier countries exploit the influx of migrant workers fleeing economic crises in their home countries, disregarding fundamental labor rights to serve their self-interests. As citizens prefer to work in offices /administrative/corporate workplaces, the physically challenging work is brought upon immigrants simply because they have no other alternative.

To approach these challenges effectively, delegates standing with the US bloc have written a resolution paper, which, after countless discussions, has passed with an overwhelming majority. The sponsors of the "L.A.M.P." (Labour Rights, Accountability, Monitoring, and Promoting Transparency) resolution were the Federative Republic of Brazil and the United States of America, with notable signatories such as Indonesia, the People's Republic of China, the



Confederation of Workers of Mexico, Japan, and Germany. The main, most outstanding clause proposition is the creation of an Ethical Labour Certification - qualifying supply chain enterprises with a grading system that rewards those that comply with ILO's existing framework. An ILO's Regional Assessment Subcommittee formed by interdisciplinary experts will evaluate candidates for the certification.

Another noteworthy clause would be the **Remedies And Victims Empowerment Navigation (RAVEN) Programme**, in collaboration with UNHRC and UNICEF. It recommends a Remedy program for survivors of forced and child labor with education and reskilling support.

# Gender Equality in the Workplace: Moving from Promises to Action

*Polina Telepova*

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has played a crucial role in establishing legal reforms for progress towards gender equality. One example can be the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) of 1951, installing the principle of “equal pay for equal work”. In 1979, the adoption of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) marked a transformative moment, embodying recommendations of International Labour Organization (ILO) standards and deepening the connection between global human rights and workplace gender equality. Manufactured textile goods are majorly carried out in Asia, with 40 million people in this sector. With mostly women as laborers, working conditions are often dangerous and violate basic labour standards and human rights. The ILO is working on substantial improvements, one of them being the “Global Gender Equality Program”. Adopted in 2008, it strives to empower women in the workplace, to focus



on achieving economic equality through labour market reforms and training programs, and to support gender-sensitive policies.

All United under one block, delegates have collaborated on writing one resolution together, with the name of “Rising Star Resolution”. Key outstanding clauses can be mentioned as: the

creation of the Global Business Forum on Gender (GBFG), hosted annually in ILO member states’ capitals, to display progress in gender equality, as well as the gradual implementation of nurseries from 2026 to 2035 that should be based on women over 18 years of age, to advocate companies to organize childcare services and nurseries at the workplace. Other significant noteworthy clauses are the creation of the Fostering Life-Oriented Work (FLOW) programme aiming at giving women a decent work-life balance, promoting more flexible forms of work beneficial to women such as job-sharing and flex-time, and the implementation a Global Business Forum on Gender (GBFG) annually led by the China Enterprise Confederation (CEC), funded by NGOs, ASEAN and other international organizations, private and public sector firms.

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# Tackling the Surge of Counterfeiting and Piracy in a Digital World

*Maxime Beckrich*

In today's digitalized world, the distribution and impact of counterfeiting on governments, consumers, and industries have become increasingly evident. Marcos Boturi, OECD Director



for Public Governance, describes this as an issue facing an “innovation-driven global economy”. At its core, counterfeiting is an intellectual property (IP) issue, and resolutions are often discussed at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Geneva.

According to a OECD study, counterfeit and pirated products account for approximately USD 509 billion in

international trade - 3.3% of all world trade (OECD, 2019). These significant losses directly benefit large networks of organised criminal groups and hamper economic well-being in a wide range of areas, including health, safety and security (Europol, 2022).

There is irony in the fact that the same online marketplaces that host or allow some of these perpetrators to hide in plain sight, whose revenue and reputation are affected by the reprehensible actions of these individuals. One thing is certain: the rise of technology, particularly e-commerce, has legitimized counterfeiting to some degree (Kennedy, 2020).

Unsurprisingly, counterfeit and pirated products come in forms as diverse as the areas of activity they affect. From luxury goods to fake medicine, a common trait of counterfeit products is that they are often of low quality. Whether due to subpar materials or, in more dangerous cases, fake pharmaceuticals that can present a serious health hazard (Europol, 2022).

China remains the leading source of counterfeit goods, which are shipped along complex trade routes to developed economies of the Global North, as well as emerging economies like Brazil (OECD, 2019).

Despite the challenges faced by governments and international institutions in their ability to limit the influence of such a phenomenon, several attempts at solutions have been implemented. Government-led initiatives generally involve encouraging stakeholder cooperation and enacting specific legislation to regulate e-commerce platforms, such as the EU's Digital Services Act and the U.S. Shop Safe Act (OECD, 2021).

At the European level, Europol has partnered with the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) to tackle fraudulent online shops and seize counterfeit goods in over 50 countries (Europol, 2022). However, in Europe in particular, the effectiveness of these efforts is confined to the online domain at present, as searches for physical counterfeit goods at customs are overshadowed by other priorities such as human and arms trafficking, or potential terrorist activity (OECD, 2019).

Corporate initiatives include the development of AI tools by major online marketplaces to detect fake listings and partnerships with law enforcement to shut down counterfeiting operations (OECD, 2021).



During the Geneva Annual Conference, the WIPO delegation produced a concrete working paper after 48 hours of intense discussion. Initially, the discussions were somewhat fraught and animated, giving rise to distinct currents of thought which led to the committee to split into two groups. According to the Chinese delegation, one was more in favor of “global collaboration”, the other took more of an “imperialist” approach. Eventually, following measures and solutions were adopted by the committee to address this issue :

#### 1. Raising public awareness

In order to raise awareness on the subject, the commission has suggested educational programs in schools and universities to raise awareness on the importance of intellectual property, in collaboration with UNESCO.

#### 2. Establishment of Legal Framework for AI regulation

The creation of a Central Cyber Committee (CCC) was recommended to strengthen the international legal framework and support developing countries. This committee would also support the use of AI and blockchain to accurately measure the effects of organised counterfeiting and piracy, and develop appropriate sanctions on a case-by-case basis.

#### 3. Strengthening Cooperation with IBERIA-FUJI Initiative

This initiative would organize an annual WIPO forum to address cross-border intellectual property protection and establish minimum legal standards among member countries.

In addition, delegates from Spain and Japan argued strongly in favour of initiatives to promote economic benefits through public-private partnerships, including tax breaks for companies implementing measures to prevent copyright infringement.

#### 4. Funds

The funding for the AI incorporating research models and awareness-raising programs discussed by the committee would operate through the establishment of the “WIPO Cybersecurity Assistance Fund”, with the IMF as main funder. The IMF would also be given responsibility for helping developing countries strengthen their cybersecurity infrastructure.

Despite numerous amendments, the U.S. delegate expressed skepticism about reconciling the two schools of thought but praised the “civility” shown throughout the discussions.

Some delegates, such as Brazil’s representative—who had previously interned at a cybersecurity company—had extensive experience with intellectual property issues. For others, it was their first exposure to the topic. Nevertheless, all the participants seemed to have embraced the issue and did their utmost to come up with an effective resolution plan on very short notice.

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# Re-globalisation: Less Developed Countries must be included in the big picture

*Jim Au Yeung*

As of 2024, 44 countries - or, in official terms, economies - are classified as Less Developed Countries (LDCs) by the United Nations Trade and Development Office. This figure includes 32 African countries, 8 from Asia, 3 from the Pacific region, and 1 Caribbean state. The status as a LDC allows these states to enjoy preferential market access, aid, and other forms of assistance.

Many of these LDCs were shaped by the brutality of colonialism. During the imperialist period, these LDCs were targets of labor exploitation and extraction of raw materials by European empires, limiting their ability to develop or diversify their economies under colonial control. Today, many LDCs still rely on raw material exports and lack the infrastructure and capital to develop modern industries, leaving their economic development vulnerable to market fluctuations and disadvantaged in global trade competitions.



Haiti, for example, has been suffering with the inability to develop its economy following its colonial period under French rule. During its colonial period, Haiti's land was heavily ploughed by France for establishing mass plantations and growing cash crops, resulting in Haiti's land being overfarmed. This has been affecting Haiti's agricultural output following independence,

and limited Haiti's capacity to develop its economy as an independent nation.

The aim of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is to unify global trade and ensure a smoothly functioning global trade market. However, the current form of globalisation that prioritises trade liberalisation and capital flow is no longer enough.

Currently, the WTO passes resolutions by consensus of all 166 member states. The purpose of the consensus-based decision making mechanism is to ensure all economies have equal voices in negotiation trade policies. However, getting all 166 countries onboard is no easy task, and most of the time, differences between states have led to gridlock in negotiation, paralysing the decision-making of the WTO. As a result, world trade governance has been ineffective, and it particularly impacts LDCs.

The WTO's Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM) has also faced many challenges in recent years. In 2019, the United States blocked the appointment of new judges, rendering the WTO's Appellate Body non-functional and undermining the enforcement of WTO rules. For LDCs, losing access to the DSM has disproportionately harmed them, as they have limited alternatives to safeguard their economies compared to more powerful countries.

Apart from the failing DSM, LDCs are also disproportionately impacted by the inadequacy of infrastructure and climate change. Landlocked and mountainous countries face significant logistical bundles when transporting goods for export, making the cost of their products higher and therefore less



competitive in the international market. Meanwhile, Small Island Developing States are often disrupted by extreme weather events. Whenever they are hit by a climate crisis, their tourism-driven or fishery-driven economies are paralysed, further disturbing them from utilising the international trade system.

Globalisation requires reform to include LDCs into the picture. As the WTO puts it, the trade system needs to be “re-globalised” to prioritise sustainability, fairness and strength that includes LDCs in the picture, so that they can access the global trade system fairly and equally as every other economies.

This year, delegates of the World Trade Committee recognise the importance of including LDCs into the global trade system. Delegates identified various key root causes of the marginalisation of LDCs and debated on several resolutions.

Firstly, delegates discussed increasing funding for infrastructure of LDCs, such as transportation, submarine cables, energy systems and digital infrastructure, to lower the costs for LDCs to export goods while allowing them to have better access to the international market.

Secondly, delegates negotiated on creating an alternate Appellate Body in the WTO that is targeted for LDCs to safeguard their access to the Dispute Settlement Mechanism. Delegates also suggested to reform the Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement into a LDCs-focused body, so that the right to dispute settlement of LDCs is protected and their issues can be appropriately addressed.

Delegates also pushed for improving education and training more skilled labour in LDCs by connecting them with university partnerships. This is to allow the LDCs to comprehensively develop their talent pools and to train new generations of skilled workers to develop new

economies and boost their competitiveness in the international market. Moreover, delegates hope to raise the awareness of the current issue of economic inclusivity by enhancing the education of LDCs.

Lastly, delegates endorsed the creation of a Crisis-Response Fund for LDCs to protect them from external economic shocks, such as climate crises and pandemics, which often hampers the economic development of LDCs, especially Small Island Developing States, as they take longer to recover. In addition, delegates proposed more preferential treatments and lower tariffs to be granted to LDCs to offset their current logistical challenges while keeping their products competitive on the international stage.

Unfortunately, despite delegates' hard effort over two days of debates, the committee failed



to reach a consensus. The delegation of Saudi Arabia voted against the draft resolution due to disagreements over a number of clauses. Although there is still a long way to go until the issues with the WTO can be resolved, the innovative ideas proposed by all WTC delegates in this year's Annual Conference are certainly constructive. The World Trade Organisation

will continue to be the primary institution that binds economies together and facilitate economic cooperations between states.



# SDG 13: Leveraging Global Trade Policies for Climate Action

*Maxime Beckrich*

“Taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” is the core principle of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13.

Probably one of the most ambitious and fragile goals set by all members of the United Nations in 2015 as part of their “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (United Nations, 2024),



the measures taken to achieve SDG 13 actively contribute to preventing the Earth from reaching its climate tipping point.

Goals such as reducing emissions by 43% by 2030, achieving net zero by 2050, and multiplying climate budgets for developing countries by a factor of eight are integral to the Sustainable Development Goals’ “blueprint for peace and prosperity.” However, these targets seem increasingly volatile—

especially as the UN itself reports that only 17% of its SDGs are on track (United Nations, 2024). With the rise of governments that are more and more reluctant to take climate action, refocusing their policies on domestic issues instead of promoting international cooperation, how can these ambitious targets still be achieved?

Concerning leveraging global trade policies for climate action, the World Trade Organization (WTO) believes that modernizing economies by leveraging human innovation for low-carbon technologies and adopting sustainable resource use will help SDG 13 succeed. Given the urgency with which the issue needs to be addressed, the WTO encourages a “learning-by-doing” mindset regarding the use and development of low-carbon technologies, such as hydrogen or carbon capture and storage infrastructure, which is particularly in vogue at the moment.

On the socio-economic side, the WTO emphasizes that international trade, particularly in developing economies, will provide them a sufficient level of income to start developing material preparedness and financial support for climate change adaptation and food security. (WTO, 2022).

On February 13th, during a session of the WTC committee at the GIMUN Annual Conference, a press conference was held to gather delegates’ perspectives on leveraging trade for climate action. Before presenting the results of this dialogue, here are a few extracts from the working document drawn up by this committee to deal with this issue:

The Ministerial Conference on the topic of leveraging global trade policies for climate action advocated extensively for increased international collaboration to extend to other regions of the world treaties such as the EU Emissions Trading System, which holds polluters responsible for their greenhouse gas emissions.

Other key measures include the lowering of tariffs on environmental goods, the creation of an impact investment fund to help poorer countries cope with the effects of climate change and the systematic incorporation of climate-related provisions in all upcoming trade agreements.

The controversial topic of a proposed “CBAM,” which aims to regulate trade’s impact on marine ecosystems, was a focal point of the discussions:

*Question: Concerning the “CBAM”, have the US and Australia agreed to this? What’s in it for developing countries?*

**Delegation of the US:** We are worried about the GDP-based tariffs that have been specified. Creating yet another oppressive trade regulation is not a good idea, either for trade or the climate.

**Delegation of Kenya:** We are interested in this proposition made by India. We believe it would be a good transition to a more sustainable and flexible trade model.



*Question: Will nationalist governments erode international cooperation in tackling climate change?*

**Delegate of Nepal:** This refers to point 5 of the working document, in which we included a focus on developing countries, precisely in the case of an erosion of international cooperation. We will aim to bring together local entrepreneurs, government

officials and donors so that they are less dependent on international cooperation. We need to exploit public environmental assets, rivers, air and create a launch pad for people in these countries to develop.

*Question: Will renewable energies and carbon capture facilities enable us to maintain trade at the same level as today?*

**Delegation of Senegal:** Energy sources tend to add up, and oil is already by far the most widely used, so we don't think that introducing new sources of energy will solve the problem.

**Delegation of India:** Investing in renewable energy is vital for energy transition, but it is major countries that have the power to implement such a transition.

**Delegate of Saudi Arabia:** We must invest extensively in renewable energies, and we join India in their declaration of an international solar alliance. We believe it will eventually become the main source of energy.

*Question: My next question is directed toward Senegal. If you do not believe that renewable energy is the solution, what do you suggest? Do you think we have to reform trade in another way, perhaps through degrowth?*



**Delegation of Senegal:** We believe that focus should be put onto helping poor countries develop their economies; this will enable them to fund sufficient infrastructure to protect themselves from the effects of climate change.

*Question: In this case, should rich countries be held responsible if natural disasters occur on their territory because of their lack of commitment or funding for developing countries?*

**Delegation of Senegal:** Indeed, we do not believe that rich countries can reasonably ask poor countries to make the same effort as they should be doing themselves. Nevertheless, Senegal sees no point in holding a country responsible for disasters that occur outside its direct control.

The success of international trade's future and the political and economic reforms being considered depend on international cooperation and the willingness of nations to prioritize long-term sustainability over short-term economic interests. As the window of opportunity to avoid irreversible climate impacts narrows, the diligence and commitment of countries to meet their commitments will be crucial to the success of these initiatives.

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# Saif al-Islam Gaddafi: from the Libyan dictatorship to the International Criminal Court

*Andrea Masciadri et Jade Foret*

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, meaning “Islam’s sword”, his father is one of the most famous dictators of North Africa, Muammar Gaddafi, and he is facing allegations from the ICC for crimes against humanity. It is sure that his CV does not put him in a good light, but we can’t say his biography would be boring. In this year’s Annual Conference, we witnessed his trial at the International Criminal Court.

Born in 1972, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi is the second son of the Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi, who ruled from 1969 to 2011. Under his father, he had a prominent role in the diplomatic and international relations of Libya, serving as the *de facto* prime minister. As he studied in England and received a PhD at the London School of Economics, he had a key role in the relations between Libya and the western world. Furthermore, he was engaged in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, for which he suggested a one-state solution that would consist of the so-called “Isratine” nation.

Even though his engagement in politics was very remarkable, the Arab Spring put an end to his governmental activities on the political stage. These protests had a strong impact on the Libyan state, as the rebels managed to overthrow Muammar Gaddafi’s dictatorship, consequently erasing Saif al-Islam’s privileged role in the state administration.

It’s exactly through these events that the life of Saif al-Islam Gaddafi began entangling with the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

When the dictatorial forces tried to suppress the protests, various crimes against humanity were perpetrated against the Libyan population.



As stated in the arrest warrant for Saif al-Islam Gaddafi of 2011 from the ICC, serving as the *de facto* Libyan prime minister, he had a major responsibility in the implementation of “a State policy [that] was designed at the highest level of the Libyan State machinery and aimed at deterring and quelling, by any means, including by the use of lethal force, the demonstrations of civilians against the regime of Muammar [...] Gaddafi”.

The protests effectively overthrew Gaddafi’s regime, however the new state forces in place decided not to collaborate with the ICC and instead to bring Saif al-Islam Gaddafi to a Libyan



court. The trial resulted in a death penalty. Despite that, he was released from prison in 2017 after an amnesty received by the Abu Bakr al-Sadiq Brigade.

The last major event in Saif al-Islam's life was his candidacy for the Libyan Presidential election. His goals in the campaign included restoring the lost unity of Libya.

As the presidential elections have repeatedly been delayed, we don't know if he would have a chance to be president and have one of the most unexpected political comebacks of all time. However, it is highly possible that his candidacy won't be accepted for the crimes he committed and for his arrest warrant from the ICC.

Today, the international criminal court discussed this trial and the charges against the former dictator of Libya. They started by the enunciation of the charges. Crime against humanity for murders, for persecutions and related to indiscriminate attacks on civilian areas. Those three charges are components of the charge for crime against humanity.



Even though Gadhafi is dead, mysteries during his governance remain. The notions of crime against humanity and war crime were introduced with the Rome Statute in 2002. According to the 7<sup>th</sup> article of this treaty, crime against humanity consist in “[specific criminal acts including murder, rape, torture, apartheid, deportation, and persecution] when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack

directed against any civilian population according to a state or organizational policy.” But the whole stake of this trial is the lack of a specific treaty on the subject. Every crime against humanity can be discussed and has been diminished due to the absence of clarity on it.

The international criminal court had to debate the efficiency of the evidence against Gadhafi. First, the legal skills of the court were discussed. As Libya is not a part of the Rome Statute, the court's legitimacy in judging this case was far from self-evident. In this case, the principle of complementarity is applied. This is a totally unprecedented situation, where the international criminal court can test this principle and end impunity for crimes committed by governments against their populations.

In the end, the CPI concluded to charge Gadhafi with 75 years of prison. 25 years for systematic murders, 20 years for torture and persecution and 30 years for attacks against his own population. The only remaining doubt concerns contradictory evidence due to the Gaddafi government's lack of transparency.



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# The 1865 International Telegraph Convention

*Polina Telepova*



During the mid-19th century, the rapid expansion of telegraph networks across Europe made conspicuous the need for a unified system between countries to enhance global telecommunication through telegraph services. Countries being nationally isolated understood the need for coordination for cross-border communications, despite the geopolitical rivalries of the time. The first International Telegraph Convention in the world

was held in Paris on March 1st of 1865, it aimed to create a standardized framework for an international use of telegraphs when each country had its telegraph system.

Additionally, the Convention sought to establish standardized tariffs for sending telegrams internationally, as well as promote the expansion of Telegraph Networks, making services available to all nations and citizens. Samuel Morse's Morse code became the standard for telegraphic communications, optimising transmission time with shorter codes instead of letters. The initial 1865 convention had 16 signatory countries, mainly from Europe, including France, Belgium, Prussia, Italy, and Switzerland. Over time, as more nations joined, the influential sphere of the convention expanded, marking the beginning of a time engulfed in international Cooperation, which in the 20th century would grow into the world as we know it, with telephone lines, radio, and later on, the internet.

In the course of this GIMUN Annual Conference of 2025, delegates negotiated technical standards, tariffs, and operational protocols to enhance cross-border communication. Some questions were raised concerning the standardization of telecommunications equipment and the protection of correspondence



secrecy, which delegates tackled in conjunction under one resolution paper, sponsored by the Austrian Empire and the Kingdom of Bavaria. The first clause and probably the most significant as it is set as a priority, is the creation of an international body: the International

Telegraph Union (ITU), to be headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, whose aim would be to manage telegraph and any other communication technology. Annual summits between States known as TCOP (Telegraphic Conference Of the Parties) will bring together the Heads of States ratifying the Convention, along with their trusted teams of experts, to promote international discussions and peace in Europe through telecommunications.

The adoption of the AQUILA programme (Agreement on Quality and Unified International Line Administration) is the second most important clause, which seeks to define a general and universal regulation for international telegraph activity. Morse Code would be the official international standard for telegraphic communication, and concerning tariffs and fees, a universal agreement has been made within the committee: all prices, (include both tariffs and fees) should be expressed in the Dutch florin and tariffs shall be limited to a maximum of seven percent of total fees paid for the sending of a message between countries. While encouraging all nations to maintain control and sovereignty over critical telegraph lines within their borders, the committee decided to uphold the protection of the secrecy of correspondence



in international telegraphic communications.

From dreaming of becoming a doctor to finding her path in international communication technology, it is the honorable secretary general of the ITU, Doreen Bogdan-Martin, who intervened on the last day of the Conference. Her most noteworthy statements were the acknowledgment of ITU's relentless

progress, which is allowing us to communicate today through means of text messages and emails, and the following insightful quote: “ITU has never been more important than it is today.”



# Yemen: a forgotten conflict at the heart of international issues

*Andrea Masciadri*

The war in Yemen is one of the longest ongoing conflicts in the Middle East. Even though Yemen could seem like a small nation and the media pay more attention to other global events, this war involves many countries around the world, as the US, Iran, Russia, and many of the Yemeni neighbors, such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Additionally, this war caused a serious humanitarian crisis that's challenging the lives of millions of people.

In this article, we'll see why the war started, what happened, and what the perspectives are. Then, after reminding what the UNSC is and its role in the conflict, we'll see how the UNSC delegates at the Annual Conference found answers to the numerous questions that the international community has. Can we bring peace into Yemen? How will we solve the humanitarian crisis? What will the future of the Yemeni population be like?

## YEMEN HISTORY



Between the 90s and the 2000s, Yemen was a united country under the rule of President Saleh.

Ali Abdullah Saleh was a Yemeni soldier who made it to the position of President in Northern Yemen, back when the nation was divided between north and south, during the Cold War. Saleh was a key figure in the reunification of Yemen in 1990 and became president of the whole newborn

Republic of Yemen. He continued to rule through the years, making strategic alliances with neighbors as Saudi Arabia and Iraq. After the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre, Saleh supported the US, cooperating with targets within the country.

However, the situation in Yemen in these years was anything but prosperous: the country was one of the poorest in the world, while the government's corruption was sucking many of the foreign aids destined to the population. It's estimated that Saleh had stolen up to 60 billion dollars as president. Therefore, dissatisfaction with the ruling class spread through the country.

It's in this context that an armed group rose to popularity in the country: the Houthis.

The Houthis, named after its founder Hussein al-Houthi, were active in Yemen from the 90s against Saleh's government, causing protests and armed conflicts.

It's also important to remember that Houthis are also a religious Shia group. Therefore, Iran, the most influential Shia country in the Middle East, supported the rise of the Houthis.

Back to Yemen, the nation was not spared by the Arab Spring, the wave of protests happening in the early 2010s in the Arab countries, the Houthis being one of the pushing forces.

Consequently, Saleh was forced to leave his place as president and proceed to a peaceful transition. However, the Houthis considered that the new government wouldn't be more effective than Saleh's and began its territorial expansion through the country.

The militia conquered the northwestern part of the country, its capital city Sana'a included.

A coalition led by Saudi Arabia and other Sunni Arab countries began to defend the old government against the Houthis, ensuring the control of eastern Yemen. The US also supported this coalition. A third party eventually emerged: the Southern Transitional Congress (STC), which conquered the vital port city of Aden and the surrounding areas. The STC gained the support of the United Arab Emirates.

From this point, many have been the efforts of the United Nations and the international community to bring peace in Yemen, but the war is still a reality and it's causing death and devastation.

The ones who are hit hardest are the civilians. Yemen has experienced an intense famine and humanitarian crisis, in which around 20 million people in the country needed external humanitarian aid.

The political involvement of the countries, Houthis' and pirates' attacks on boats, and the instrumentalization of the humanitarian aids have often made the process difficult, and the Yemeni population is desperately in need of a long-lasting solution for their country.

## WHAT'S UNSC

*One of the main actors in the UN trying to reestablish peace in Yemen is the UN Security Council.*

*The United Nation Security Council (UNSC) is one of the most important organs of the UN, as its main task is trying to maintain peace in conflict areas.*

*It is composed by the 5 permanent members (China, Russia, US, France and UK) that can put a veto on decision, and 10 non-permanent members who rotate between the other countries in the world. During the GIMUN Annual conference there were 7 of them: Algeria, Denmark, Guyana, Panama, Slovenia, Sierra Leone and Somalia).*



During their sessions, the delegates debated about how to improve the tragic situation in Yemen by many means: peace, rebuilding the economy, ensuring humanitarian aid, fighting terrorism, granting democratic political transition, and facilitating dialogue between the international actors in the area as Saudi Arabia and Iran with Yemen.

The main concern was the situation of the civilians. Therefore, the UNSC emphasized ensuring other countries sent humanitarian aid and the creation of a humanitarian corridor through the nation that could supply the most people most effectively.

On the last day, the Chairs submitted a press release from the Houthis that destabilized the harmony in the UNSC. The Houthis declared that they would continue military operations against their enemies, specifically the US and the UK and that they would block their vessels near Yemen.

These conditions forced the delegates to rearrange the agreement they came to and find practical solutions to this hardened situation.

Additionally, getting a resolution hasn't been easy as the goal was to gather many aspects, ranging from aid to fight against terrorism. After the many amendments had been discussed, approved and rejected, the UNSC finally created a draft resolution.

The last step for the draft to be approved and become official was the final vote.

Most of the states voted in favor and only the UK abstained. However, Denmark and the US voted against it. As the US has the veto, their vote against automatically meant the failure of the resolution. The delegation of the US justified itself by saying that some clauses of the draft couldn't be approved and even though they tried to negotiate them, they stayed in a way that couldn't be accepted by them.

Unfortunately, a resolution hasn't been found, and this reflects the complex international society of today. However, the discussions have been very fruitful as they highlighted many aspects of the crisis in Yemen and have brought to the table many possible solutions.

The conditions of Yemen cannot easily be solved, but the efforts of the international community could be the way of finally bringing peace and prosperity to its people.



# The Security Council calls for urgent review of peacekeeping mandates in today's geopolitical context

*Jim Au Yeung*

Since its establishment in 1948, the United Nations has focused on safeguarding international peace and security. The first line of the UN Charter reads: “We the peoples of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind.”

With this declaration, a mandate has been vested upon the UN to maintain peace and prevent armed aggression in conflict zones. The United Nations Peacekeeping Missions, also known as the “Blue Helmets” due to the helmets worn during service, have been established physical presences in several places to supervise ceasefires and monitor borders between conflicted parties. The first mission, known as the First United Nations Observe Force in Palestine, typically known as the "United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), was formed in 1948 to observe the ceasefire between the State of Israel and its Arab neighbours. Subsequently, UN peacekeeping forces have been present in many locations, including Cyprus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Côte d'Ivoire, and more.



The UN peacekeeping operations follow three crucial principles: Consent of concerned parties, impartiality, and no use of force. Before deploying a mission, the UN must seek the consent of the parties of conflict to reduce hostility between them. To maintain the trust of the conflicted parties, all UN peacekeepers must be impartial and not favour any side under any circumstances. Additionally, UN peacekeepers are

not an instrument of war. They have no mandate to launch offensive missions or take part in hostilities, except as a last resort to defend civilians or the mission as a whole.

Despite the noble contribution of UN peacekeepers in the missions, many have doubted the effectiveness of the peacekeeping missions. The peacekeeping missions have also been facing increasing challenges.

Firstly, funding for peacekeeping missions is inadequate. Peacekeeping missions are costly to operate as the delivery of supplies and equipment to often remote and insecure areas is extremely challenging. Lack of resources often delays deployments and limits the scope and geographical coverage of missions, thereby affecting their effectiveness and objectives.



Secondly, as a mission of foreign intervention, UN peacekeepers face obstacles from national governments and warring parties as they may be seen as an infringement of national sovereignty and internal affairs of the states. As a result, there are many limitations on how the peacekeeping missions can operate, which complicate the implementation of peacekeeping mandates. Moreover, the position of neutrality may be perceived by some parties as implicit support of the opposition, which risks eroding the fragile trust of conflicted parties.

In addition, the safety of peacekeeping forces is often in jeopardy as they have been the target of violent attacks. Lack of political support and resources for the Blue Helmets cause the peacekeepers to be exposed to assaults, while such instability risks the collapse of the mission as a whole.

The UN Security Council, as the primary organ for maintaining international peace and security, has the authority to adopt resolutions to refine the mandate of peacekeeping missions. However, there are often obstacles to drawing up a consensus among Security Council members. The disparities of military and financial contributions between Member States also create imbalances on how the peacekeeping mission functions on the ground.

To restore the mandate of the peacekeeping missions and ensure they can perform their objectives without hindrances, the peacekeeping mechanism needs to be reviewed to increase its suitability, feasibility, sustainability, and efficiency. In this year's Annual Conference, delegates work together to clarify the mandate of the peacekeeping missions in today's context, to strengthen the operational capacities of each mission, to coordinate peacekeeping missions and non-state actors, and to enhance post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation.

# The Reconquista: from clash of Empires to appalling betrayals - how swords and faith shaped the Iberian Peninsula

*Polina Telepova and Andrea Masciadri, with special acknowledgments to Aurélie Osnim Kota-Mamah, Tamara Florio and Benjamin Regis*

During the Middle Ages, Southern Europe and the Middle East were marked by conflicts between Muslims and Christians over land and religious dominance, and the Iberian Peninsula, modern Spain and Portugal, were a key battleground.

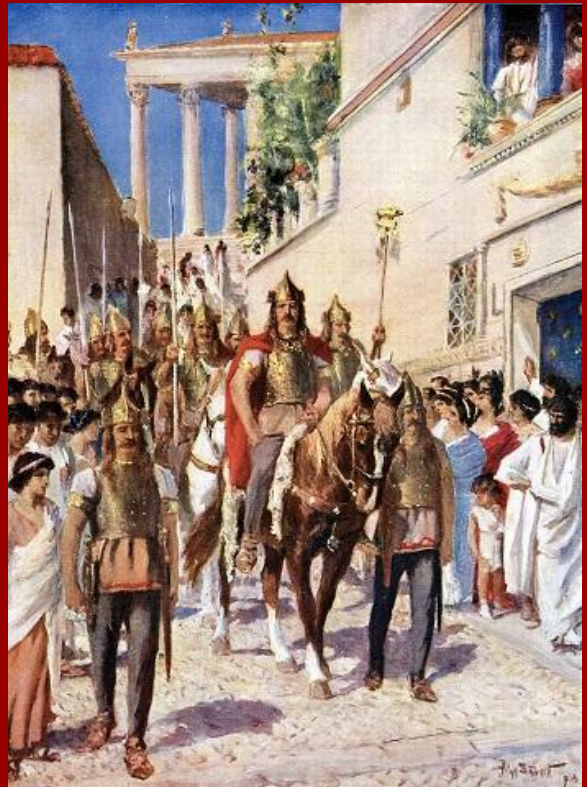
The 2025 GIMUN Annual Conference is hosting a historical Bicameral Crisis that will analyse how the Christian Kingdoms Cabinet and the Muslim Al Andalus Cabinet face each other to control the peninsula. We aim to explore the historical context and understand what the delegates have done to ensure their dominance in the region.

The Punic Wars (264-146 BC) were triggered by Rome's territorial expansion in Hispania, challenging Carthage's trade and naval power dominance. Carthage, with its vast trade network and powerful fleet, initially held strong. Still, Rome's superior military discipline, strategic warfare, and the leadership of generals like Scipio Africanus led to Carthage's gradual defeat in the Third Punic War (146 BC). Despite local resistance and guerrilla warfare, Rome eventually conquered Hispania, integrating it into its empire. Emperor Augustus established Roman control, turning the region into a prosperous economic hub with Romanized architecture and a Latin-speaking, Christian society. However, the empire faced crises, and relentless Germanic invasions forced Rome to shift its military focus away from Hispania, leaving it vulnerable.

The Visigoths, a dominant Germanic tribe, took advantage of Rome's weakening grip and invaded Hispania, establishing their capital in Toulouse before moving to Toledo after suffering defeats. Their rule brought political and religious institutions, rewriting laws and restructuring society. However, their election-based monarchy fueled aristocratic rivalries, leading to civil wars, assassinations, and internal instability. As their power crumbled, a succession crisis emerged, and desperate Visigothic rulers sought military aid from the Muslims.



This provided an opportunity for the Arab General Musa ibn Nusayr and his lieutenant Tariq ibn Ziyad, who crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and swiftly defeated the Visigoths, seizing control of Hispania. The Umayyad dynasty redistributed land among generals, while allowing local populations to retain privileges in exchange for adherence to Islamic traditions and tax payments. Under Islamic rule, the empire expanded rapidly, reaching its greatest territorial extent.



Despite Muslim dominance, Christian resistance persisted. The Battle of Covadonga (722 AD) was the first major Christian victory, with King Pelayo establishing the Kingdom of Asturias. Muslim forces later attempted to expand into France but were halted, prompting Charlemagne to conquer Catalonia and reinforce Christian influence in the northeast. Over the following decades, Christian kingdoms and counties, such as León, Galicia, Pamplona, and Ribagorza, emerged, claiming to be the rightful heirs to Iberia. The Reconquista, a long-term effort to reclaim the peninsula, began in earnest.

Meanwhile, internal conflicts weakened Muslim control. Frequent Berber revolts diverted attention from Christian expansion, while political fragmentation led to decentralization, with various regions of Al-Andalus declaring independence or gaining autonomy. These factors ultimately contributed to the gradual Christian reconquest of Spain.

Inside the prestigious United Nations Office in Geneva, our fellow delegates represented some of the most important figures in Ancient history, the most notable ones are: the Emir of Cordoba, General of Cordoba, Lord of Seville, Count Of Barcelona and King of Pamplona,



all the while trying to find the best way to bring their faction to victory. For instance, the Muslims succeeded in uniting under a unitarian regime, thanks to the many marriages and oaths between the lords.

At the initiation of each session, the debates were moved forward in time, jumping 50/100 years, starting in 912, and the end of the week time elapsed to 1147. At the

beginning of the crisis, the Muslims were very united under the rule of the Caliph of Cordoba.



They had very strong armies but didn't fight the Christians yet; for them, the priority was to defend themselves before attacking. The heat rose when the Christians tried to defend themselves and attack the Muslims, resulting in winning lots of battles during the great campaign of Castilla. 4 different armies fought each other and crushed the region. In each adversarial group, baffling betrayals were made : The Christians, united under one king, deceived him with the help of Babers in the mountains, and the Emir of Toledo and Emir of Granada defied their own Calife to take his title. The Christians didn't know if they needed to fight each other, or unite themselves even after betrayals against the Muslims who were deeply divided on the topic of the future Calife. The only clear-headed people of the crisis were the Franks, who could find allies anywhere and waited at the border of the Pyrenees for over a century, looking for the right moment to lead an offensive and bring back Christian's rule in the kingdom.

It is right to highlight key turning points during discussions, as they played a crucial role in shaping the story's unique trajectory.

To set the scene, whispers of an important event sweeping through Al-Andalus transmitted rumors that the Caliph, leader of the Islamic empire, was on his way to Toledo, signaling a potential turning point in the ongoing power struggle between rival factions in the region. As the Caliph approaches, reports from merchants suggest that military preparations are being made for his arrival. The atmosphere is tense, as some believe the Caliph's presence could provide much-needed reinforcements for the Muslim stronghold, while others fear it signals the start of a major military campaign. The people of Toledo lingered patiently for a possible shift in the balance of power. Two battles have been fought, resulting in two disasters. The first battle was a siege, where an army used trebuchets (siege weapons) to breach the defenses of the city during the Cordoba Wars. After the breach, the attacking army stormed the city, and the defending troops surrendered. The Caliph of Cordoba was captured and held prisoner by the Caliph of Toledo. Without wasting any time, the Caliph of Toledo declared himself the new Caliph of Hispania (the entire Iberian Peninsula) in the grand mosque of Cordoba, taking control and asserting his authority. The first impactful turn of events describes a dramatic shift in power between two Muslim rulers in Al-Andalus, with Toledo emerging victorious in the conflict, while Cordoba's authority crumbles.



vulnerable state, he is tricked into believing he needs medical attention. Under the pretense



of receiving advice, he is sent to the countryside, where 50 cavalymen from Badajoz ambushed his convoy, capturing him and transporting him to Valencia before being shipped to Granada. While being held hostage, Barcelona faces a crisis that could have a major impact on the region's political future, possibly altering the balance of power. This is a highly calculated act of betrayal, with the plotters using manipulation to achieve their goal of capturing the Count, plunging Barcelona into instability.

The tides of history have been shaped by the ambitions of leaders and the resilience of generals. Each conflict left lasting echoes, redrawing borders and redefining dynasties. As a matter of conclusion, the conquest of Al-Andalus ended in 1492 with the fall of Granada, the last Muslim kingdom on the Iberian Peninsula, to the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. This marked the completion of the Reconquista, a centuries-long series of campaigns by Christian kingdoms to reclaim territory from Muslim rulers. The surrender of Granada ended over 700 years of Muslim rule in parts of Spain and solidified the dominance of Christian kingdoms in the region, leading to the establishment of a unified Christian Spain.

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