



UNITED NATIONS HISTORICAL SECURITY
COUNCIL
**SITUATION IN THE FORMER
YUGOSLAV STATES**

I. Committee Background

The United Nations Historical Security Council (UNHSC) is an imitation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) set in the past times and sessions to discuss historical topics regardless of existing treaties and agreements. Delegates are invited to propose new solutions that contribute to resolving these conflicts.

The United Nations Security Council, the official UN version of this committee, was founded after World War II, addressing the failings of the League of Nations to maintain international peace. Its first session was held on January 17, 1946. It is one of the six principal committees of the United Nations and is the only UN body with the authority to issue resolutions that are binding to all 193 member states. The UNSC is charged with ensuring international peace and security, with its role outlined in the United Nations Charter to establish peacekeeping operations, enforce international sanctions, and authorize military actions. It also has the power to approve changes to the UN Charter. It aims to resolve international disputes, following Chapter VI of the UN Charter, which calls on parties to seek solutions via negotiation, arbitration, and other peaceful means. However, Charter VII also empowers the UNSC, if necessary, to take assertive actions, including imposing sanctions or authorizing the use of force.

Throughout the years, it has been highly active in working to resolve international conflicts. Nevertheless, in the decades following its formation, it was largely paralyzed by the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union. Afterwards, though, it became more active with peacekeeping operations following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. During such times, it aims to respond to failing states, civil wars, or complex humanitarian emergencies, often ordering deployments into conflict zones in the absence of ceasefires or parties' consent.

The UNSC consists of five permanent and ten elected members, meeting regularly to assess threats to international security, including civil wars, natural disasters, arms proliferation, and terrorism. The main five members, or the P5s, include the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Russia, China, and France. These members were chosen due to their privileged status in the UN's founding in the aftermath of WWII and have the right to veto a resolution. The rest are elected by the United Nations General Assembly, serving 2-year, nonconsecutive terms. The UNSC also features a president, who rotates monthly to ensure an agenda is set for its non-permanent members. The committee remains largely unchanged since its formation in 1946, leading to some debate about the need for reforms.

II. Introduction to Topic

Post WW2, Yugoslavia, formally known as the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, was established as a socialist federation of six republics: Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia. Through a policy of “Brotherhood and Unity”, Josip Broz Tito ruled the republic through centralized control. However, after Tito’s death in 1980, long-suppressed ethno-nationalists began to surface.

During the 1980s, Yugoslavia suffered from economic inactivity, debt, and growing regional disputes. In the Republic of Serbia, Slobodan Milošević rose to power by appealing to Serbian nationalism, trying to strengthen Serbia’s control over Yugoslavia. The other republics, which feared invasion, pursued independence. In June 1991, Slovenia declared independence. This led to a brief war that lasted only ten days and had minimal casualties. The reason for such a short conflict was that Slovenia contained very few Serbs and had little strategic advantage.

In June 1991, Croatia also gained independence, which triggered a longer war against Serb Military groups who were supported by the Yugoslav People’s Army. However, by 1992, ceasefires were agreed upon, but some conflicts remained in certain areas. In 1992, Bosnia & Herzegovina declared independence too; however, although this independence was recognized by the EU and the US, it was fought against by Bosnian Serbs, who tried to create a Greater Serbia called the Republic Srpska, with support from Serbia. This led to the beginning of the Bosnian War, which was marked by intense violence and ethnic cleansing.

III. Current Issue

In the middle of 1993, Bosnia & Herzegovina is in the middle of a three-way conflict between Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims), Bosnian Croats, and Bosnian Serbs. War has caused immense suffering, including tens of thousands of deaths, over two million displacements, and widespread conflicts, including ethnic cleansing and sexual violence. At this moment in time, Serbs control large portions of Bosnia with backing from Belgrade. The Bosnian Croats were initially allied with Bosniaks, but by 1993, tensions escalated into open fighting between Croat and Bosniak forces, particularly

in central Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosniaks hold Sarajevo and scattered districts but remain militarily weaker.



The UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was deployed, initially in Croatia and later extended to Bosnia, and focuses on humanitarian aid delivery, ceasefire monitoring, and safe area protection, but it lacks enforcement powers. Though not yet directly engaged in combat, NATO has begun enforcing a no-fly zone over Bosnia since April 1993, signaling growing Western involvement. Multiple peace plans have been proposed, including the Vance–Owen Plan (early 1993), which tried to divide Bosnia into ethnic provinces. The plan eventually failed due to rejection by Bosnian Serb leaders. The war has created one of Europe's worst humanitarian disasters since World War II. The mass movement of refugees has destabilized neighboring states. Reports of concentration camps, mass killings, and sexual violence against civilians have horrified the international community. Access for humanitarian convoys is frequently blocked, and UN peacekeepers face attacks and intimidation.

IV. Essential Questions

1. How should the UN protect civilians in the face of atrocities, especially given the limited mandate and resources of UNPROFOR (UN Protection Force)?
2. To what extent can and should the international community intervene in the internal affairs of Bosnia and the wider Yugoslav conflicts?
3. Can the Council support or enforce a viable peace settlement after the failure of the Vance–Owen Plan?
4. How can the spillover of conflict into Croatia, Serbia, and Macedonia be prevented?
5. Should the UN take steps to establish mechanisms for investigating and prosecuting war crimes?

6. Should the UN expand UNPROFOR's (UN Protection Force) mandate to include peace enforcement, not just peacekeeping?
7. How can the Council ensure compliance with resolutions, given the limited willingness of parties to cooperate?
8. What role should NATO or other regional organizations play under UN authority?
9. How should the Council balance humanitarian needs with political and military realities?
10. What steps can be taken to ensure long-term stability in the Balkans beyond the Bosnian conflict?

V. List of Countries

1. USA
2. UK
3. China
4. Russia
5. France
6. Chile
7. Egypt
8. Guinea-Bissau
9. South Korea
10. Germany
11. Poland
12. Italy
13. Nigeria
14. Honduras
15. Argentina
16. Oman
17. Czechia
18. Indonesia
19. Bosnia
20. Serbia
21. Saudi Arabia
22. New Zealand
23. India

VI. Sources

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