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The Security Council

Membership of the Security Council

- Albania
- Brazil
- China
- Ecuador
- France
- Gabon
- Ghana
- Japan
- Malta
- Mozambique
- Russian Federation
- Switzerland
- United Arab Emirates
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Introduction

The topics covered in this chapter are a guide to help direct your research on your State's positions. Updates on likely topics for the Contemporary Security Council will be posted online throughout the fall. These updates will be available on the AMUN website and the AMUN Accords. The Contemporary Security Council topics below are current as of 1 July 2023 and may not include all topics that the Council might discuss at Conference. With the ever-changing nature of international peace and security, what is important to the Council may change between now and the start of Conference.

For each topic area, representatives should consider the following questions to help them in gaining a better understanding of the issues at hand, particularly from their country's perspective:

- How did this situation begin?
- Who are involved in the situation and what are their concerns?
- How have similar situations or conflicts been peacefully resolved?
- What roles can the United Nations take in the situation? What roles should the United Nations take in the situation?
If there are non-state actors involved in a conflict, are there any States supporting them?
If so, which ones?

Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine

From 2007 to 2011, the European Union (EU) and Ukraine negotiated a comprehensive free trade agreement. The agreement was widely popular with Ukrainian citizens but became politically problematic when Vladimir Putin, president of the Russian Federation, announced his opposition on the grounds that the trade agreement was a threat to Russia. Political pressure from Russia mounted until Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich **abruptly abandoned the trade deal** in November 2013. In response protests known as the **Maiden Revolution** erupted across Ukraine. Protests continued for months and involved **increasingly violent clashes** between protesters and security forces, the eventual formation of an interim government, and the formal ouster of Yanukovich and his exile to Russia on 22 February 2014.

Protests against the new interim government began the next day in Sevastopol, the largest

city in Crimea. The Crimea region is 90 percent ethnically Russian, and a majority of its citizens backed Yanukovich and his pro-Russian policies. Protests continued throughout the week and on 27 February, unmarked forces began occupying key government buildings in Crimea. [Under occupation](#), the Crimean parliament voted in an emergency session to form a new regional government around the Russian Unity party. Russia has since [confirmed](#) the unmarked forces were from its own Black Sea Fleet, which is headquartered in Sevastopol by [treaty](#). With the Russian Unity party in power, Russia formally [incorporated](#) the southern peninsula of Crimea on 18 March 2014.

Also in March, separatists in the eastern region of the Donbas on the Russian border, including the major cities of Donetsk and Luhansk, seized control of the regions from the national government. The Ukrainian army attempted to retake control, but suffered a crippling defeat in the [battle of Ilovaik](#) on 2 September 2014. The [Minsk Protocol](#) signed on 5 September 2014 and the [Minsk II](#) signed on 12 February 2015 established a tenuous cease-fire between Ukraine and the separatists groups in the self-governing regions of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) and the Luhansk People's Republic (LPR). The agreements also restored national border security and maintenance to the Ukrainian government resulting in a period of relative stability and peace from 2015 to 2020.

On 14 September 2020, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy approved a national security strategy that involved [increasing partnership with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization \(NATO\)](#) with the eventual aim to gain membership. The approved strategy was followed by a year of increasing tensions between Ukraine, Russia and NATO members, with Russia declaring that such an alliance posed a [national security threat](#). Limited skirmishes between Ukrainian and Russian forces throughout the year. By November 2021, the international community reported a renewed build up of Russian forces on the Ukrainian eastern border. After Ukraine rejected Russia's proposal to abandon pursuing NATO partnership on 17 December 2021, Russian troops also began to consolidate in Belarus on Ukraine's northern border, while fighting began to escalate in DPR and LPR regions. On 24 February 2022, minutes after Russian President Vladimir Putin declared a "special military operation" seeking the "demilitarization and denazification" of Ukraine, [Russia invaded Ukraine](#) from the north (Belarus), east (Donbas) and south (Crimea).

[Since the initial invasion](#), Russia has abandoned its push to take Kyiv from Belarus in the north and Ukraine has been able to hold Odesa and Mykolaiv in the south, retaining critical access to the Black Sea. Russian forces remain consolidated in the east and southeast regions. [Ukraine launched a counter-offensive](#) in June 2023, and [fighting has primarily occurred](#) around the city of Bakhmut, on the western border of the DPR region. [Russian missiles and drone strikes](#) continue throughout Ukraine, while [Ukrainian drones](#) have hit targets in Crimea, on its borders with Russia and in Moscow.

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The Situation in the South China Sea

Since the 1970s, China, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam have [pressed competing territorial claims on islands and waters in the South China Sea](#), with China pressing the most expansive claims. Although the islands themselves—principally the Spratly and Paracel Islands and the Scarborough Shoal—are small and largely uninhabited, it is [believed the region has substantial oil and natural gas reserves](#), along with productive fishing areas and heavily used shipping lanes. In 2002, China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which includes those countries with competing territorial claims in the South China Sea, signed the [Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea](#). In the Declaration, the parties pledged to abide by the United Nations Charter and international laws to promote peace and stability in the region.

In 2013, the Philippines [began international arbitration proceedings against China regarding the status of islands in the South China Sea](#), claiming China unlawfully interfered inside the Philippine Exclusive Economic Zone. In 2016, the arbitration court ruled in favor of the Philippines. However, the Chinese government declined to acknowledge the ruling and continued to press its territorial claims in the South China Sea, known as the “Nine-Dash Line” citing historic rights to the area. In 2014, [Vietnam and China filed complaints with the United Nations Secretary-General](#) over planned Chinese offshore oil drilling near the disputed Paracel Islands. China and Vietnam accused the other of aggressive actions, including claims of attempted ship ramming. Regional concern was also raised that [China was dredging near the islands to create outposts](#) and, potentially, military bases. [Regional negotiations on the topic are stalled](#), as ASEAN is divided and China has signaled its preference for bilateral negotiations with individual countries.

On 9 August 2021, the Security Council held [a meeting to discuss maritime security](#). In the meeting, Vietnam raised the topic of the South China Sea. [Vietnam pledged to continue working with ASEAN and China](#) to fully implement the 2002 Declaration, while also asking the Security Council to make important and concrete contributions to enhancing maritime security.

[China and the United States accused each other of increasing tensions in the South China Sea](#). The United States claimed it was promoting stability in the region in the face of illegal actions from China. China denied the accusations, claiming the United States was the biggest threat to the stability of the region as China was already working with ASEAN countries on implementing the 2002 Declaration.

In February 2023, [the Philippines and the United States signed an agreement](#) that would allow the United States to increase its military presence in the Philippines, followed by the largest joint military exercise to date in April. This was widely seen as a measure to increase United States presence in the region amidst increasing tensions. In March, the Chinese government threatened “serious consequences,” saying it would take “all necessary measures” to ensure Chinese security [after the United States sailed a warship near the disputed Paracel Islands](#), in what the United States described as a “freedom of navigation operation.” In April, shortly before the joint American-Philippine military exercises were held, the [Philippine government claimed a Chinese coast guard ship](#) blocked them from visiting a disputed island and nearly causing a collision. On May 14, the [Philippine government announced it placed navigation buoys in the disputed Spratly Islands](#) to assert its claim over the area.

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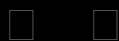
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