



## Introduction

The Contemporary Security Council topics below are current as of July 2021 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, which should assist them in gaining a better understanding of the issues at hand, particularly from their country's perspective:

- How did this situation begin?
- Is this a new conflict or a re-ignition of a previous conflict?
- How have similar situations and conflicts been peacefully resolved?  
What State and regional actors are involved in this conflict?
- If there are non-State actors involved in a conflict, are there any States supporting them? If so, which ones?
- How does this conflict indirectly affect my country? (regionally, alliances, economically, etc)

## The Situation in Libya

February 2021 marked the 10-year anniversary of the uprising in Libya that toppled the government of Muammar Gaddafi. Following the outbreak of the First Libyan Civil War in 2011, the Security Council passed [Resolution 1970](#), which required Member States to prevent the supply of weapons to Libya. The following month, the Council passed [Resolution 1973](#), which authorized Member States to take all necessary measures to protect civilians, establish a no-fly zone and enforce an arms embargo. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) used Resolution 1973 as the legal basis for military intervention to assist the anti-Gaddafi uprising. Later that year, the Council passed [Resolution 2009](#), which created the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), a political mission with a mandate to support the new transitional authority in establishing the rule of law. UNSMIL remains active today.

After Gaddafi's ouster, divisions among the participants in the uprising undermined efforts to create a new national unity government. A Second Libyan Civil War broke out in 2014 between the internationally-recognized Government of National Accord (GNA), based in the capital city of Tripoli, and the Libyan National Army (LNA), led by Khalifa Hifter, which controlled (and still controls today) Benghazi and much of eastern Libya.

Hifter launched [an assault on Tripoli](#) in April 2019, but after 15 months of fighting his forces were [defeated and forced to retreat](#). Hifter's campaign against Tripoli is reported to have received substantial foreign assistance in the form of weapons and mercenaries from Russia and the United Arab Emirates, though both governments deny direct involvement. The LNA's failure to take Tripoli has been credited to [intervention](#) by Turkey, which supported the GNA with advisors, airstrikes and mercenaries. In October 2020, after a week of talks hosted by the United Nations in Geneva, the two sides agreed to [an immediate ceasefire](#). Further talks in February 2021 resulted in the [creation of a new interim government](#) led by Abdul Hamid Dbeiba as an interim prime minister and a three-member presidential council. The new Government of National Unity (GNU) [received the endorsement](#) of the House of Representatives in March 2021. [Nationwide elections](#) are scheduled for December 2021.

Significant challenges remain despite this progress. Foreign forces, mercenaries and weapons are ever-present, threatening the peace and the establishment of a stable Libya. Both the GNA and the LNA have violated the arms embargo. Terrorist groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Libya (ISIL-Libya) also continue to operate in Libya, fighting to establish a fundamentalist Islamic state. The years-long conflict has severely damaged Libya's economy and healthcare system—the poor security situation and a lack of funding have reduced the number of functioning health facilities in the country by 50 percent since 2019. The ongoing coronavirus pandemic has claimed the lives of at least 3,000 Libyans, putting an additional strain on an already damaged healthcare system.

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# The Situation in the Middle East (Yemen)

After a revolution in 2011–2012 that drove longtime President Ali Abdullah Saleh from power, Yemen experienced several years of civil unrest and instability. In 2014, a civil war erupted when the Ansar Allah movement, commonly known as the Houthis, captured the capital city of Sana'a and drove the internationally-recognized government of Yemen into exile. In 2015, a coalition of Arab countries led by Saudi Arabia launched a bombing campaign against the Houthis. The Houthis often responded to airstrikes by firing ballistic missiles across the border into Saudi Arabia. The bombing campaign has inflicted massive damage to Yemen's infrastructure and caused substantial civilian casualties, but the civil war remains stalemated.

Saudi Arabia and its allies continue to maintain an air and sea blockade, preventing deliveries of food and fuel from entering Houthi-controlled air and sea ports. In March 2021, Saudi Arabia offered to lift the blockade on the condition that the Houthis first agree to a ceasefire monitored by the United Nations. The Houthis rejected this and demanded that Saudi Arabia lift the blockade first before agreeing to and implementing a ceasefire. Fighting continues on multiple fronts, especially in the northern Marib governorate, where many civilians had fled to escape fighting in other parts of the country.

As of December 2020, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimated that [233,000 people](#) had died in the conflict. More than half of these deaths were from indirect causes such as lack of food or medical care. [Nearly half of Yemen's population](#) cannot get sufficient food, and that number is expected to rise as aid agencies face reduced funding. The humanitarian situation only worsened with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yemen has reported [over one thousand](#) deaths from COVID, but a lack of testing and medical infrastructure means that the actual numbers might be much higher. In March 2021, [360,000 doses](#) of COVID-19 vaccine were shipped to Yemen via the COVAX initiative, and the country is currently slated to receive a total of 1.9 million vaccines through the program. Distribution of the vaccines has been [hampered](#) by the war, distrust of the vaccine and religious objections.

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