Oasis International School Model United Nations

The Special Conference Committee

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Guiding Package

Topic (2) : The Arab-Israeli conflict (Maintaining stability in the region after the Yom Kippur war)

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Abstract

    In the second half of the 20th century, the Arab-Israeli conflict had increased immensely. The roots of all Arab-Israeli conflict are bound in the rise of Zionism and Arab nationalism towards the end of the 19th century. The Arab-Israeli conflict emerged in the early 20th century, after the civil war in 1947 and transforming into the first Arab-Israeli clash in May 1948 following the declaration of establishment of the State of Israel. In 1956, Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran and Suez Canal for all Israeli shipping, after nationalizing it on July 26, 1956. Israel responded on October 29, 1956, by invading Sinai with British and French support. The United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was created and deployed to oversee the demilitarization. The UNEF was only deployed on the Egyptian side of the border, as Israel refused to allow them on its territory. On May 19, 1967, Egypt expelled UNEF observers, and deployed 100,000 soldiers in Sinai. It again closed the Straits of Tiran to all Israeli shipping. On May 30, 1967, Jordan signed a mutual defense pact with Egypt. On June 5, Israel launched an attack on Egypt. The Israeli Air Force destroyed most of the Egyptian, Jordanian, Syrian and Iraqi Air Force in a surprise attack. On October 6, 1973 Egyptian and Syrian forces launched a coordinated attack against Israel on Yom Kippur, as many of Israel's soldiers were away from their posts hoping to win back territory lost to Israel during the third Arab-Israeli war, in 1967. Taking the Israeli Defense Forces by surprise, the Arab armies made impressive advances. After several days, Israel was fully mobilized, and the Israel Defense Forces began beating back the Arab gains at a heavy cost to soldiers and equipment. A U.S. military aid was going to Israel but Nixon delayed it as a tacit signal of U.S. sympathy for Egypt. On October 25, an Egyptian-Israeli cease-fire was secured by the United Nations. The time frame for this topic is until the **2nd of November 1973.**

<u>Introduction</u>

The Arab-Israeli conflict refers to the political tension and military conflicts between a number of Arab countries and Israel. The roots of all Arab-Israeli conflict are through the rise of Zionism as well as Arab nationalism towards the end of the 19th century. The Sectarian conflict between Palestinian Jews and Arabs emerged in the early 20th century, after the civil war in 1947 and transforming into the first Arab-Israeli conflict in May 1948 following the declaration of establishment of the State of Israel. As a result of Israel's victory in the 1948 Arab–Israeli War, any Arab caught on the wrong side of the ceasefire line was unable to return to their home in what became Israel. Otherwise, any Jews on the West Bank or in Gaza were exiled from their property and homes to go and live in Israel.

In 1956, Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran for all Israeli shipping, and blockaded the Gulf of Aqaba. Many argued that this was a violation of the 1949 armistice agreement, which was between Israel, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria . On July 26, 1956, Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal Company, and closed the canal to all Israeli shipping. Israel responded on October 29, 1956, by invading the Sinai Peninsula with British and French support. During the Suez Canal Crisis, Israel captured the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula. The United States and the United Nations soon pressured the British into a ceasefire, by damaging its financial system. Israel agreed to withdraw their troops from Egyptian territory. Egypt agreed to free the Israeli shipping in the region and demilitarized Sinai from their troops. The United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was created and deployed to oversee the demilitarization. The UNEF was only deployed on the Egyptian side of the border, as Israel refused to allow them on its territory.

On May 19, 1967, Egypt expelled UNEF observers, and deployed 100,000 soldiers in Sinai. It again closed the Straits of Tiran to all Israeli shipping, returning the region to the way it was in 1956 when Israel was blockaded. On May 30, 1967, Jordan signed a mutual defense pact with Egypt. Egypt mobilized Sinai units, crossing UN lines (after having expelled the UN border

monitors) and mobilized and massed on Israel's southern border. Egypt was getting ready for war. On June 5 1967, Israel launched an attack on Egypt. The Israeli Air Force (IAF) destroyed most of the Egyptian Air Force in a surprise attack, then turned east to destroy the Jordanian, Syrian and Iraqi air forces. This strike was the crucial element in Israel's victory in the Six-Day War. At the war's end, Israel had gained control of the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), Shebaa farms, and the Golan Heights. The results of the war affect the geopolitics of the region to this day.

On October 6, 1973, Syria and Egypt staged a surprise attack on Israel on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. The Israeli military were caught off guard and unprepared, and took them about three days to fully mobilize and be prepared for war. This led other Arab states to send troops to reinforce the Egyptians and Syrians. In addition, these Arab countries agreed to enforce an oil embargo to industrial nations including the U.S, Japan and Western European Countries. These OPEC countries increased the price of oil, and used it as a political weapon to gain support against Israel. The Yom Kippur War accommodated indirect confrontation between the U.S and the USSR. When Israel had turned the tide of war, the USSR threatened military intervention. The United States secured a ceasefire on October 25.

All of this conflicts have had an effects of the cold war, between the U.S.A and the USSR as they both tried to spread their ideas through the world, as the world was divided into two blocks. Egypt and all their alliances were allied with the USSR as they gain USSR's military aid, however Israel was allied with USA for the same reason. Some believe that this Arab-Israeli conflict is just a mirror to the USA and USSR conflict .

Definition of the key terms

Key Words	Definition
Zionism	A movement for originally the re-establishment and now the development and protection of a Jewish nation in what is now Israel. It was established as a political organization in 1897 under Theodor Herzl, and was later led by Chaim Weizmann.
Sectarian conflict	Refers to civil, political and armed struggle between Palestinian Arabs and Jewish Yishuv.
Straits of Tiran	Narrow sea passages between Sinai and Saudi-Arabia which separate the Gulf of Aqaba and the red sea.
Sinai Peninsula	A triangular peninsula in Egypt which is a sparsely populated desert region between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea
OPEC	Organization Of The Petroleum Exporting Countries: Algeria, Angola, Ecuador, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela.
Gaza Strip	The Gaza Strip, or simply Gaza, is a pen exclave region of Palestine on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea that borders Egypt on the southwest for 11 kilometers and Israel on the east and north along a 51 km border.
West Bank	The West Bank is a landlocked territory near the Mediterranean coast of Western Asia, forming the bulk of the State of Palestine.
Shebaa farms	Shebaa Farms, also spelled Sheba'a Farms is a small strip of disputed land at the intersection of the Lebanese-Syrian border and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights

<u>Key issues to focus on</u>

The Yom Kippur War, Ramadan War, or October War also known as the 1973 Arab–Israeli War, was a war fought by the coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria against Israel from October 6th to the 25th, 1973. With the exception of isolated attacks on Israeli territory on 6 and 9 October, the military conflict actions during the war took place on Arab territory, mostly in the Sinai and the Golan Heights. Egypt and Syria wanted to regain the Sinai and the Golan Heights respectively. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat wanted also to reopen the Suez Canal. Both did not plan to destroy Israel, although the Israeli leaders could not be sure of it.

a) Events leading to war

Four months before the war broke out, Henry Kissinger offered Ismail, Sadat emissary, to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt and Israel would withdraw its troops from all of Sinai, except some strategic points. Ismail said he would return with Sadat's reply but never returned. Sadat was already determined on war. Sadat declared that Egypt was ready to sacrifice a million Egyptian soldier to regain its territory. From the end of 1972, Egypt concentrated their efforts for getting ready for war and building their forces, by receiving jet fighters, anti-aircraft missiles, tanks and antitank weapons from the Soviet Union and improving their military tactics. The policy of the Soviet Union was one of the major causes of the Egyptian military weakness. President Nasser was only able to obtain the materiel for an anti-aircraft missile defense wall after visiting Moscow and pleading with Kremlin leaders. He said that if he did not get the supplies, he would have to return to Egypt and tell the Egyptian people Moscow had abandoned them, and then will ask United States of America for military help[1]. The United States of America would then have the upper hand in the region, which Moscow could not permit it.The Cold War was often fought between the superpowers of the United States and the Soviet Union in a proxy war. These were wars fought between other countries, but with each side getting

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[1] http://www.cs.mcgill.ca/~rwest/wikispeedia/wpcd/wp/y/Yom_Kippur_War.htm

support from a different superpower. Examples of proxy wars include the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Yom Kippur War, and the Soviet Afghanistan War. In an interview published in Newsweek (April 9, 1973), President Sadat again threatened war with Israel. Several times during 1973, Arab forces conducted large-scale exercises that put the Israeli military on highest level of alert. The Israeli leadership already believed that if an attack took place, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) could repel it without any problem.

b) Events during the war

On October 6, 1973,- the 4th Arab-Israeli conflict- hoping to win back territory lost to Israel during the third Arab-Israeli war, in 1967, Egyptian and Syrian forces launched a coordinated attack against Israel on Yom Kippur, as many of Israel's soldiers were away from their posts observing Yom Kippur. Taking the Israeli Defense Forces by surprise, the Arab armies made impressive advances with their up-to-date Soviet weaponry. Iraqi forces soon joined the war, and Syria received support from Jordan. After several days, Israel was fully mobilized, and the Israel Defense Forces began beating back the Arab gains at a heavy cost to soldiers and equipment. A U.S. airlift of arms aided Israel's cause, but President Richard Nixon delayed the emergency military aid for a week as a tacit signal of U.S. sympathy for Egypt. On October 25, an Egyptian-Israeli cease-fire was secured by the United Nations.

Major parties involved

Egypt: One of the strongest army in the middle east at the time of the conflicts, had a major role in the Yom Kippur war as they were involved directly in the war with Syria between them and Israel

Syria: had a major role in the Yom Kippur war as they were involved directly in the war with Egypt between them and Israel

Israel: had a major role in the Yom Kippur war as they were involved directly in the war between them and Egypt and Syria

USA: had a major role in ceasing fire in the Yom Kippur war and helping Israel with military aid but Nixon delayed it as sympathy for Egypt

USSR: helped the Egyptian army with military aid so that USA won't have the major hand in the Middle East as they were having an ideology conflict (The Cold War)

UN: had a major role in ceasing fire in the Yom Kippur war and created the UNEF to secure the area

Guiding questions

- How to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict?
- What deals should be made to satisfy both sides of the conflict?
- How did each country react at that time?
- What did each country do wrong at that time that caused more problems afterwards?

Possible solutions

- Sign a treaty between Arabs and Israel
- Improving businesses between Arabs and Israel so they could live in the middle east without problems
- Israel should decrease the conflict with Palestine
- Relocate Israel in the United States of America
- Create homes in the Sinai Peninsula for Palestinians to live in

Useful links

- **http://www.history.com/topics/yom-kippur-war**
- **http://www.science.co.il/Arab-Israeli-conflict.asp**
- **https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/arab-israeli-war**
- **http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/modern-world-history-1918-to-1980/the-middle-east-1917-to-1973/the-yom-kippur-war-of-1973/**

- http://www.britannica.com/event/Yom-Kippur-War
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yom_Kippur_War
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab%E2%80%93Israeli_conflict