

Committee Guide



*The Kurdish Region – Sovereign
State, Federal Region or Conflict
Zone?*

Security Council



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1. Personal Introduction

Dear delegates,

my name is Annika Kuczka and I am this year's President of the Security Council together with my lovely Co-Chair Rika Kluck. I am 19 years old and I currently live in Munich but will move to Berlin in June. I study at the University at the Hochschule des Bundes für öffentliche Verwaltung. There I get to know a lot of different aspects on politics, international security and military.

This OLMUN will be my sixth one besides two BERMUNs and a lot of school-intern MUNs at the Graf-Anton-Günther school which I attended until 2016. I will be my third time chairing a committee at the OLMUN. I once was a delegate in the Security Council myself representing Rwanda. I am really looking forward to a wonderful time with all of you. I hope that we will achieve a lot in our resolutions, meet new people, enjoy ourselves during evening activities but most of all: Just have fun!

Hello everyone!

I'm very happy to welcome you to this year's Security Council with my dear co-chair Annika!

My name is Rika Kluck, I'm 20 years old and currently I'm studying medicine in Hannover after graduating from Cäcilienchule Oldenburg in 2016. In my free time I like to spend time with my friends, do photography and to do sports.

My first OLMUN was in 2013 when I participated as Delegate in the ECOSOC. Since then I already had the pleasure to take part and learn about many aspects of the conference and the Inner Circle including chairing the GA 3rd in 2015. That's why I'm already very excited for the upcoming OLMUN!

I'm really looking forward to this year's conference and meeting all of you! I hope that we will have productive work and a lot of fun both in the committee and at the evening activities!

2. General Information

First of all, we would like to welcome you to the Security Council of OLMUN 2018! We hope that the conference will be a great experience for all of us. In order to have great debates in the committee, preparation is extremely important! With this committee guide we want to give you a first impression of the topic, but you should know that further research is inevitable! You need to inform yourself about the topic and of course your country and its opinion. For that you can find many information on the internet, so Google will be your best friend doing your research.

Also, it will be very helpful for the debate, if you make yourself familiar with the Rules of Procedure at OLMUN and the specific Rules of Procedure for the Security Council, both documents can be found on the OLMUN website.

2.1 Policy Statement

Every delegate must prepare a policy statement. It should not be longer than five minutes and include the most important information of your country's view on the topic. The structure should be clear and it should be easy to understand. These are some questions that should be included in your policy statement and can help you to build a proper structure:

What country are you representing and what is your general idea on the topic? How does your country think the problem can be solved? Which ideas do you have? What are the motivations for your country? Of course you are allowed to give examples and tell which steps your country has already taken. Remember: Your goal is to convince other nations to cooperate with you and to give everyone an idea on your country's opinion.

In the end, you can add a frame with a formal beginning and ending. You can find many examples of policy statements on the internet, but most importantly it should simply answer the questions above. A policy statement's structure is not as strict as one from a draft resolution, so don't worry much about the exact format. You don't necessarily have to send us your policy statement prior to the conference as we think that you also see the importance of your preparation. Nevertheless, you can still send us your statement and get our feedback if you are not sure if your research is deep enough.

2.2 Draft Resolution

The resolution is the most important part of our committee work. As the draft resolutions you prepare prior to the conference by yourselves will be the main basis of our work in the Security Council, we expect you to already put some work into them beforehand.

If you don't have much experience with writing your own resolution, you can find some examples at olmun.org (<https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/Archiv/>). In the OLMUN handbook there are helpful phrases for the resolutions that can help you get an idea of how to write one on our topic.

As we'd like to make sure everyone is well prepared for our committee work, we ask you to send us your draft resolution by **JUNE 1**. This way we can also give you some feedback that can help you in your final preparations. We'd like to see at least one page from everyone, this way the lobbying process will be way more interesting for all of you!

3. Security Council

The Security Council is the most important part of the United Nations. It consists of 15 members, five of them are permanent member states. Those are France, Russia, Great Britain, the Peoples Republic of China and the United States of America. The others are elected for a two years term from the General Assembly. For 2018 those countries are: Bolivia, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Netherlands, Peru, Poland and last but not least Sweden. In June, Russia will have the Presidency. The permanent members have special rights in the council such as the right to veto important resolutions or decisions.

The Security Council has the power to create international sanctions, establish and legitimize military operations for peacekeeping and it is the only organ of the UN with the ability to pass internationally binding resolutions. That makes it the most powerful organ of the United Nations.

4. The Issue

4.1 The Kurds and their origins

The origins go back to the collapse of Ottoman Empire after the second world war. At first rights were gained to the Kurds but with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk the rights were never established. After the winner powers have split up the area into many new countries, the Kurds were now placed on the territories of other states. It led to the cut off of family and economic relationships. Nowadays they are located in five countries (we will present the situation of four countries in this committee guide): Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Armenia. All in all the Kurds are one of the biggest ethnic groups without a real state (about 24-27 mio.). They call themselves “the biggest nation without a land”. But they are not all the same, the religious groups within the Kurds differ from Sunni, Shia, Yazidis, Alevis and also Assyrian Christians. Their political aims are very diverse as well.



<https://www.pressenza.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/xkurdistan1-720x447.gif.pagespeed.ic.19eQ5yV12W.png>

4.2 Kurds in Iran

Iranian Kurdistan is one of the four parts of the Kurdish regions. It is a home for about 6,7 mio. Kurds, 4-5 mio. are Sunni. In the 10th century two Kurdish dynasties ruled this region, they were called Hasanwayhids and Ayyarids. The government tried to gain control over other Kurdish-inhabited areas in Iran which lead to fights in which the Kurds were defeated. In 1867 monarch Nasser-al-Din Shah finally ended the rule of the Kurds. In 1979 the Kurds supported the revolution against the Shah because he was

always against this ethnic group. But Ayatollah Khomeini as well as the Shah accused ethnic minorities contrary to Islamic doctrines. In 2016 the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI), the Kurdistan Freedom Party (PAK) and the Komalah declared the ceasefire ended. Many attacks on Iranian buildings followed and caused the death of at least 160 people. But nevertheless the Kurds in Iran are very separated into different groups which makes it difficult for them to gain control. If there is no progress in Iraq, there will neither be no solution in Iran.

4.3 Kurds in Turkey

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk at first assured partly autonomous rights for ethnic minorities. At the end only Jews, Greeks and Armenians received these rights but not the Kurds. Since then their traditions and language has been suppressed. In 1978 the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) was formed and started a conflict in 1984. This conflict was a very brutal one because it consisted of abductions, armed raids, homicides and suicide bombers. The Turkish army answered with air attacks. After the arrest of the Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan 1999 there has been a ceasefire. And since 2009 peace talks were taking place. In July 2015 those peace talks were disbanded and the conflict started to increase again. In the last years it caused around 3000 deaths and many people were imprisoned. Still the Kurdish party HDP has a seat in parliament, Erdogan strongly acts against the party and its members. Further the Turkish operation “olive branch” brought fear to the Syrian Kurds and exacerbated the conflict even more. A solution could only be found if the Turkish government changed their position which is very unlikely to happen.

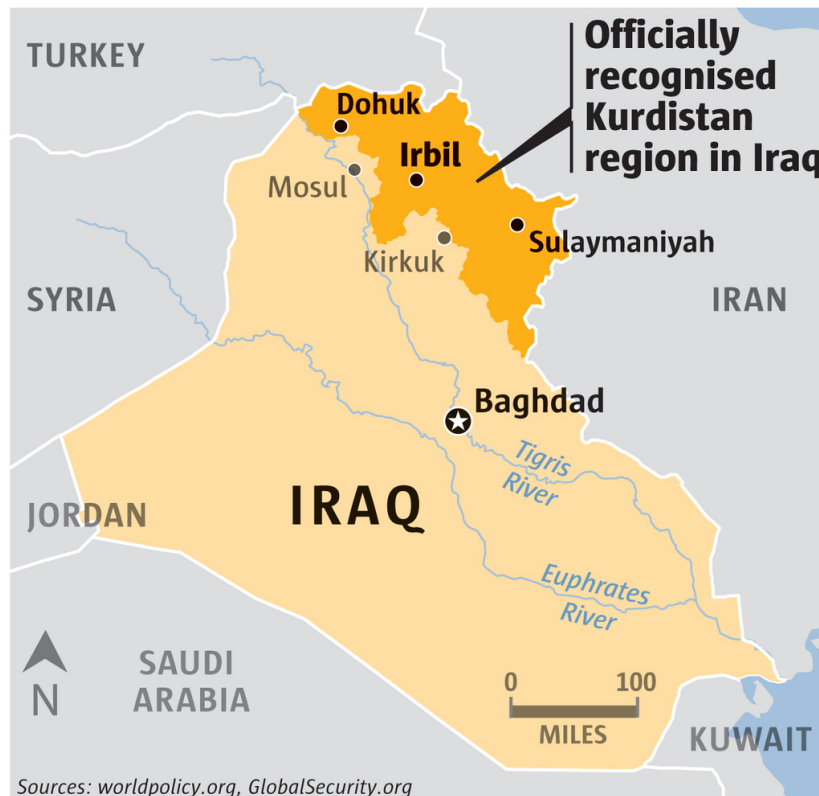
4.4 Kurds in Iraq

The situation of the Kurds in Iraq is very critical right now. Representing 15-20% of the population, they are the biggest minority in the country. There are sovereign regions in the north of the federal state known as Iraqi Kurdistan, which have their own Kurdish parliament and armed forces (Peshmerga). Nevertheless, these regions still are part of the Iraq even though many Kurds from that area work towards a sovereign state of Kurdistan. In the past years there were many debates and fights about the official borders of Iraqi Kurdistan between the Iraqi and the regional parliament. As the Kurds in that region represent many different groups and opinions as well, there were big intern discussions as well. Some Kurdish parties are pleased with the current situation

of being a federal Iraqi state. Others want to work towards more rights in the federal system underlining their own identity. A big part of the people, though, want to split from Iraq and lay the foundation for an independent Kurdistan.

In 2014 the central government started holding back money from the Kurdish parliament and the conflict got worse as the Kurds planned to sell oil individually. Iraqi politics stopped these plans by standing up against their own state diplomatically in the international community. Meanwhile, the Islamic state was taking over big parts of the country and the Iraqi military withdrew from disputed areas close to the Kurdish border. The Peshmerga took over these areas and gained the formal power about this area including the city Kirkuk. As a consequence of these actions Kurdish president Masoud Barzani announced his intention to hold a referendum about the official separation from Iraq in 2014. The past month were seen as signs of division, but finally the threat of the Islamic State was given more importance and the Kurdish leaders agreed to move the referendum to a later point in time.

On September 25, 2017 the federal parliament held the postponed referendum even though it had still not been approved by the Iraqi government. Nevertheless, around 93% of the voters favored an independent, sovereign state of Kurdistan, separated from Baghdad. This referendum, though, was not only held in the official Kurdish regions, but also in the disputed territories which are not officially part of the federal region. Rapidly, the Kurdish regional government started celebrations and started making plans for building a new state and declaring their independence, even though not all Kurdish parties wanted to be part of that new „leadership body“. Meanwhile, Iraq started an offensive against them. They stopped all flights to Kurdish airports, deployed troops to the areas close to the state, Iran closed the common border. Finally the Iraqi military recaptured the oil rich city of Kirkuk in the disputed area weeks later. Luckily, this military offensive was mostly considered moderate and most of the Peshmerga withdrew without big fights. As a consequence of these actions, Masoud Barzani (president of Iraqi Kurdistan since 2005) announced his resignation and stepped down. Since that, no further steps were taken towards a sovereignty and the process of building an independent Kurdistan in Iraq was put on hold. Nevertheless, there is still a big potential for escalation and the conflict has not ended.



MARK NOWLIN / THE SEATTLE TIMES

<https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/iraqi-ban-on-flights-to-kurdish-capital-irbil-begins-friday/>

4.5 Kurds in Syria

Counting around 2 million people the Kurds make out 7-10 percent of Syria's population. Most of them live in the northern part of the country. Many years in the past the Kurdish people have been discriminated against, but their status got better in 2011 when hundreds of thousand civilians were granted the Syrian citizenship, that had been taken away from many Kurds back in 1962.

Due to the chaos caused by the Syrian war in the last years and ISIS fighting in big parts of the country, the Kurds in the north were able to extent their area. With the help of the YPH (People Protection Units) the Kurdish region gained de facto autonomy in 2012 and a state called Rojava was built. The people there try to use democratic tools to organize their state. This process has been endangered recently, though, by attacks from Turkey on the YPG. Due to the fact that the YPG has supported the PKK in the past, Turkey

For this topic, here is a helpful video that gives a good overview:

<https://youtu.be/gaKwjvxukvg>

4.6 Steps the UN has already taken

Until now, the UN Security Council has not taken many steps in the regards of the Kurds in the past. Nevertheless, the situation of human rights has already been addressed. In 1991 the SC passed resolution 688 which called upon Iraqi authorities to stop the repression of the Iraqi and also Kurdish people, to let humanitarian aid into the country and to hold up the basic human rights of the civilians.

When the Kurdish regional government in Iraq announced the concrete plan to hold the referendum on independence in 2017, the UN did not support it. The Security Council opposed the step due to the fact that a sovereign Kurdish state would hold a big risk of falling into destabilization in that region. Just a couple of month earlier Iraq had defeated ISIS in most parts of the country, so the overall situation has not been very safe yet. Also there was and still is a big potential of escalation between Iraq and the federal state, therefore the UN intended to prevent more violence by opposing the referendum. Nevertheless, the Kurdish government held the referendum in September 2017.

In January 2018, the Syrian Kurds appealed to the SC asking for help in the conflict with Turkey. President Erdogan planned a big offensive against the Kurdish military, which had gained power over big parts of northern Syria during the ongoing war.

5. Useful Links and further research

We have collected some helpful links here, so we advise you to look at them to get a deeper look into the conflict.

But all in all please make sure you use academic literature such as Foreign Affairs, International Studies Quarterly, Journal of Muslim Affairs, or Internationale Politik. Think Tanks like the Heritage Foundation or SWP could also provide useful information. If you can't find anything or don't have access on these websites, use renowned newspaper to gather information. Some examples are: The Kurdish Globe, Your Middle East, The New York Times - International Edition but also the Zeit, Al Jazeera or Neue Züricher Zeitung. And if you really would like to go deep into the topic, you can also read a book about it. Here are some recommendations:

- The Kurds in Iraq. Building a state within a state. (Ofra Bengio, Boulder, 2012)
- The Future of Kurdistan. The Iraqi Dilemma. (Kerim Yildiz, London, 2012)
- Federalism and Kurdistan Region's Diplomacy. (Alex Danilovich, Farnham 2014)

Please also have a look at the official website of the Security Council (<http://www.un.org/en/sc/>) and OLMUN (www.olmun.org)

Concerning your country you can always find information at the official website of the government and the German ministry of foreign affairs gives a good overview over all countries. (<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/regionaleschwerpunkte>) In addition, there is a page about each country of the Security Council on the homepage of the United Nations. (<http://www.un.org/en/sc/members/>).

Further there are encyclopedias for every country for example: <https://www.encyclopedia.com/places/asia/turkey-political-geography/turkey-republic>.

And of course the CIA Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/index.html>.

Official Declaration of Human Rights: <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

Here is another video about the problem: <https://youtu.be/rFQdwNzzTP4>

<http://www.mepc.org/journal/iraqi-kurds-and-iraqs-future>

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/10/02/the-united-states-must-prevent-disaster-in-kurdistan/>

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/turkey/2014-04-17/how-kurds-got-their-way>

<http://www.mepc.org/iraqi-kurdistan-and-turkey-temporary-marriage>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/30/world/middleeast/kurds-iraq-independence.html>

