

BSBMUN VI



Security Council

Study Guide

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Letter from the Chairs:

Dear delegates of the Security Council,

The two of us are honored and truly delighted to be chairing in, arguably, the most important committee of the UN: the Security Council, for BSBMUN VI! As chairs, we hope to see each and everyone of you engaged in debate, while noticing your accomplishments. During our dynamic committee sessions, we anticipate to be amazed by your discussions, passionate speeches, reactions to the hectic crises that will strike the global community, and overall debating skills.

As you all must be aware, the UNSC deals not only with warfare and imminent threats, it operates in a much broader scope: from intervening in malicious abuses of power (such as totalitarian governments), to strengthening bonds between countries and discussing the future of military technologies.

Per say; we will have a few busy days together. We hope this study guide will give you the foundation to better understand these topics and give you room to further research in order to perceive your delegation's positions on these issues. If any delegate has any doubts or concerns regarding this document or the overall committee, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are excited to meet all of you and hope you enjoy the conference!

João Pedro Fonseca
Head Chair

Daniel Cavalieros
Vice Chair

Committee Description



The Security Council is the United Nations' most powerful body, with "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security." Five powerful countries sit as "permanent members", being China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. These were the great powers, or their successor states, that were the victors of World War II. Permanent members can veto any substantive resolution, including those on the admission of new member states or nominees for the office of Secretary-General. The other 10 honorary members are elected with two-year terms.

Since 1990, the Council has dramatically increased its activity and it now meets in nearly a continuous session. It dispatches military operations, imposes sanctions, mandates arms inspections, deploys election monitors and more.

The decisions adopted by the Security Council are legally binding texts that apply to all UN Member States, only being overruled by the General Assembly or the Secretary General. When peace is seriously threatened, the Security Council can adopt resolutions imposing obligations or sanctions on one or more States. To resolve international conflicts, the Security Council sometimes imposes sanctions; deploys Peacekeeping missions that bring soldiers and police directly into conflict zones. Though, peacekeeping is the UN's largest and most expensive activity, also being controversial, especially when "robust" operations apply lethal force.

Topic: Maintenance of International Peace and Security with COVID-19



Aim: COVID-19 has imposed a global pandemic and forced a worldwide quarantine, virtually causing global economies to collapse. Due to the Chinese origin of the virus, Donald Trump has gone out of his way to attack the country, calling it the 'China Virus', and tensions are increasing by the day, on the possibility of a new 'Cold War'. The aim of this conference is to dial down any potential acts of warfare between countries, in an attempt to maintain world peace.

Context: The United States of America and the People's Republic of China have been in an intense Trade War since 2018, where the title for largest world economy is being disputed. This Trade War has consequented in relations between the two economic powerhouses being extremely sensitive, with the potential of a new "Cold War" being very likely.

INTRODUCTION - The duel for global hegemony

The U.S.-China trade war is the culmination of longstanding trade frictions that the two countries have been unable to resolve through official channels. Washington's grievances arise from China's use of protectionist trade policies, such as export duties and quotas, state subsidies, restrictions on market access, and deliberate intellectual property rights (IPR) theft. Beijing, on the other hand, underscores China's developing country status and has disputed the legality of various U.S. anti-dumping and countervailing measures.

Following the publication of Beijing's Made in China 2025 strategic plan in late 2015, tensions began to increase between the two parties. The plan, which outlines Beijing's updated industrial economic policy, has in the U.S. been interpreted as China "doubling down" on the contentious issue of state involvement in the economy. During the subsequent election year, then-Republican primary candidate Donald Trump capitalized on the growing domestic concerns by making a renegotiated Sino-American trade relationship a key part of his foreign policy platform. Trump committed to protecting American jobs from Chinese competition and ratcheted up tensions with a flurry of provocative statements. These campaign promises were gradually translated into U.S. policy following Trump's inauguration.

Notwithstanding the strained relations, Presidents Trump and Xi took steps towards rapprochement in the first months of 2017, agreeing to establish a 100-day plan to resolve disagreements over trade. The combined efforts resulted in a new trade agreement, including the mutual opening of key markets, covering items such as beef, card payment services, credit rating agencies, and financial institutions. However, the underlying structural trade issues remained, and in parallel with the negotiations, Trump instructed the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to investigate whether cheap foreign – although mainly Chinese – steel imports posed a threat to U.S. national security. This was later followed up with an order to specifically investigate Beijing's policies on intellectual property, technological transfer, and innovation.

In December 2017, the Trump administration released the new U.S. National Security Strategy. The strategy described China as a revisionist power with goals “antithetical to the interests and values of U.S.,” and emphasized that the U.S. henceforth would directly counter any unfair trade practices, calling it economic aggression. Shortly thereafter, the USTR’s Steel investigation concluded that the abundance of cheap steel and aluminum imports compromises domestic production and U.S. National Security. This authorized President Trump to take countermeasures, and by March 2018, sweeping tariffs had been imposed on all but a handful of trade partners. The act prompted retaliatory measures from a range of actors, including allies, thus setting off a wider tariff conflict.

Following the release of the USTR’s findings on Chinese trade practices, the Trump administration filed a WTO claim against China, alleging unfair IPR and licensing practices, and further instructed U.S. agencies to restrict Chinese investment in key technologies and impose tariffs in related sectors. Beijing immediately threatened retaliatory tariffs and countered with two WTO claims, disputing the legality of both the sanctions and the steel tariffs. Notwithstanding efforts during the ensuing trade talks, the two were unable to overcome their differences, and ultimately, they released their final lists of sanctioned products, each worth 34 billion USD. As these country-specific tariffs took effect on July 06, 2018, the general tariff conflict evolved into a full-blown trade war.

Corona Virus and new 'Cold War'

The relationship between the US and China was already teetering close to the edge of a cliff before COVID-19, but the pandemic pushed it right off. The dynamic between Beijing and Washington has become so contentious in the coronavirus era that China experts now say the two major powers have stumbled into the early days of a new Cold War that could prolong the pandemic, exacerbate the economic devastation linked to the virus, and weaken the world's ability to thwart common threats.

Hard-liners are calling on Beijing to be more defiant, emboldened by the Trump administration's efforts to blame China for the mounting death toll in the United States. Moderates are warning that Beijing's strident responses could backfire, isolating the country when it most needs export markets and diplomatic partners to revive its economy and regain international credibility.

The clash with the United States over the pandemic is fanning broader tensions on trade, technology, espionage and other fronts — disputes that could intensify as President Trump makes his contest with Beijing a theme of his re-election campaign.

While the hostility has so far been mostly confined to words, there are warning signs the relationship could worsen. The trade truce that Mr. Trump and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, reached in January could fall apart, despite recent pledges to keep to its terms. Other tensions, including those over Taiwan and the South China Sea, are also flaring.

The Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union was characterised by an intrinsic distrust between Washington and Moscow and a hypernationalistic competition for economic, military, and technological hegemony. Similar trends are playing out between the US and China.

Since his 2016 campaign, Trump has portrayed China as a global bully that's taken advantage of the US (even as he's showered Chinese President Xi Jinping with flattery on numerous occasions). As president, Trump sparked a trade war with China, raising anxiety about the US economy across partisan lines. A deal signed in January seemed to put the trade war on pause, giving Trump a diplomatic victory to tout as he sought to campaign for reelection on a booming economy.

But then came the coronavirus, which tanked the economy, put the deal at risk, and spoiled any hope of a detente in the near future. Though Trump praised China's handling of the virus in its early days, before it was a pandemic, he's shifted to bashing the Asian country at every turn and blaming it for the scale of the pandemic. China has been widely accused of exacerbating the pandemic by suppressing information on the virus, which originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan.

In its first months, the outbreak delivered a political blow to Mr. Xi, after officials held back information and discouraged doctors from reporting cases. Mr. Trump appeared confident that the United States had little to fear, and he praised Mr. Xi's handling of the crisis.

Their brittle unity collapsed as coronavirus deaths exploded in the United States. The White House and the Republican Party tried to shift the focus of ire, blaming China for reacting slowly and covering up crucial information. The U.S. is leading the global coronavirus death toll with 98,578 reported fatalities and more than 1.6 million reported cases, according to an NBC News tally. China's health officials have reported 4,634 deaths and 82,985 cases.

Now, the president and his advisers have gone a step further, however, by suggesting the virus leaked from a Wuhan lab that researches bat coronaviruses. In May, the director of the Wuhan Institute of Virology called speculation that the coronavirus pandemic originated there "pure fabrication."

The World Health Organisation, among others, has generally tied the origins of COVID-19 to a market where seafood and wild and farmed animals were sold. Meanwhile, Beijing has vehemently rejected the notion that the virus leaked from a lab, and China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March suggested COVID-19 came from the US military.

Trump has criticized China's handling of the COVID-19 crisis, questioning the accuracy of its official death toll and accusing the country of a lack of transparency. The president, who has previously referred to the outbreak as the "Wuhan virus" or "China virus," has also accused the World Health Organization of helping Beijing cover up the outbreak. In 2020's WHO general assembly — without naming China directly — the U.S. delegation said there had been "an apparent attempt to conceal this outbreak by at least one member state."

China's leaders have struck back through party-run media outlets that said the United States and other democracies had ignored warnings and disastrously mismanaged the crisis. China has repeatedly held up its response as a model that other countries should follow, not criticize.

The backlash, in turn, has reignited the battle over trade, technology, and other issues, with the United States issuing rules that would bar the Chinese telecom giant Huawei from using American machinery and software. Public sentiment in the United States and other countries has also hardened against China, according to recent polls.

As the governments spread conspiracy theories about the other, Trump has raised the possibility of seeking reparations from Beijing over the virus. The president last month also announced plans to slash funding to WHO, which he accused of being too China-centric.

At the same time, the administration has moved to cut funding to American researchers who've collaborated with the Wuhan lab, jeopardizing progress on finding a cure for the virus in the process. Similarly, the Justice Department has

been working to squash Chinese influence in American academia, which is reminiscent of former Sen. Joe McCarthy's Red Scare.

Concurrently, the race to create a coronavirus vaccine has become a point of national pride for both countries, drawing comparisons with the space race between the US and Soviets.

The tit for tat between Beijing and Washington over the coronavirus has also extended to the media world. After Trump placed limitations on the number of Chinese citizens who can work in the US for five state-run Chinese news organisations, China in March expelled American journalists working for three of the most prominent US newspapers.

The tensions spilled over into the United Nations in June when China said that the urgency of the pandemic demanded that the United States pay its delinquent U.N. assessment, which by some calculations exceeds \$2 billion. The American Mission to the U.N. responded by saying that the United States customarily pays its assessments at year's end and that China was "eager to distract attention from its cover-up and mismanagement" of the coronavirus crisis.

The antagonism is not limited to the Chinese or US governments and has seeped into the US public. Americans' favorability views of China have hit a historic low during the pandemic, according to a recent Pew Research survey, giving Trump a backdrop for an aggressive China policy.

Others have warned that China needs to be prepared to deal with clashes over Taiwan and the South China Sea, where American warships have stepped up patrols this year. Some hard-liners have gone further, warning of war.

The consequences of the breakdown in US-China relations is going to be grave for the world and for the global economy because the ability of the US and China to work together was the keystone of the whole arch of globalization and

global trade. With that pulled out, there's going to be a tremendous amount of disturbance.

South China Sea: the Cuba of Cold War II

The Trump administration escalated its actions against China in July by stepping squarely into one of the most sensitive regional issues dividing them and rejecting outright nearly all of Beijing's significant maritime claims in the South China Sea.

The administration presented the decision as an attempt to curb China's increasing assertiveness in the region with a commitment to recognizing international law. But it will almost certainly have the more immediate effect of further infuriating the Chinese, who are already retaliating against numerous U.S. sanctions and other penalties on other matters.

Previously, U.S. policy had been to insist that maritime disputes between China and its smaller neighbors be resolved peacefully through U.N.-backed arbitration. But in a statement released, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the U.S. now regards virtually all Chinese maritime claims outside its internationally recognized waters to be illegitimate. The shift does not involve disputes over land features that are above sea level, which are considered to be "territorial" in nature.

Although the U.S. will continue to remain neutral in territorial disputes, the announcement means the administration is in effect siding with Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, all of which oppose Chinese assertions of sovereignty over maritime areas surrounding contested islands, reefs and shoals.

China has sought to shore up its claim to the sea by building military bases on coral atolls, leading the U.S. to sail its warships through the region in what it calls freedom of operation missions. The United States has no claims itself to the

waters but has deployed warships and aircraft for decades to patrol and promote freedom of navigation and overflight in the busy waterway.

A day after the White House announced it would reject nearly all of China's maritime claims in the South China Sea, the U.S. warship Ralph Johnson steamed through the contested waters Tuesday, according to U.S. 7th Fleet officials.

China accused the U.S. on Tuesday of trying to sow discord between China and the Southeast Asian countries with which it has long-standing territorial disputes in waters that are both a vital international shipping lane and home to valuable fisheries.

Overall Picture

On 1 July 2020 – 111 days after the World Health Organisation declared Covid-19 to be a global pandemic – the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 2532. Recognising that the unprecedented extent of the novel coronavirus pandemic “is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security”, the Security Council “demands” a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda, and supported the appeal of UN Secretary General António Guterres for a global ceasefire. In this post, I will discuss the potential role of the Security Council in addressing global threats such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the legal nature of the measures called for in the resolution. In particular, I address whether the Council's “demand” is to be considered a legally binding obligation for States and non-State armed groups.

It is impossible to solve US-Chinese relations in a single committee. Though, by understanding current and past events, the prevention of Cold War II may be acquired. This committee aims to create global concordance on the measures for contingency of the CoronaVirus, settling pandemic-related tensions, like procurement and punishments of false accusations, the long-standing debt the US owes UN and attempting to strengthen ties between both nations in an attempt to

minimize the economical and global security impacts coming at the end of the pandemic.

Key Terms:

Trade War: A situation in which countries try to damage each other's trade, typically by the imposition of tariffs or quota restrictions.

Tariff: a tax or duty to be paid on a particular class of imports or exports.

Made in China 2025: A strategic plan that was initiated in 2015 to reduce China's dependence on foreign technology and promote Chinese technological manufacturers in the global marketplace. The goal is to reach this objective by the year 2025, a decade from the year when the plan first took root.

Cold War: A state of political hostility between countries characterized by threats, propaganda, and other measures short of open warfare. (Includes the potential of nuclear warfare)

Coronavirus: Coronaviruses are a type of virus. There are many different kinds, and some cause disease. A newly identified coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, has caused a worldwide pandemic of respiratory illness, called COVID-19.

Intellectual Property Rights: Rights given to persons over the creations of their minds. They usually give the creator an exclusive right over the use of his/her creation for a certain period of time.

US National Security Strategy: The National Security Strategy (NSS) is a document prepared periodically by the executive branch of the government of the United States for Congress. It outlines the major national security concerns of the United States and how the administration plans to deal with them.

Positions of Major Blocs and Countries

United States of America:

The United States of America is arguably the most powerful country in the world, economically and socially. Threatened by the economic growth of the

Chinese, it has gone into a trade war in order to prevent them from overtaking the US economically.

The US that has been the most affected by the outbreak of COVID-19, with it leading in total cases and total deaths (per October 14th). Due to its poor response to the outbreak has affected the economy greatly, giving China, a country who had a quick recovery to the outbreak, an opportunity to overtake the US economically. The US already has had a very fragile relationship with China over the past couple of years, and due to China's poor containment of the virus (them being ground zero), the threat of a potential China-US 'Cold War' is at its highest.

People's Republic of China:

In recent history, China has grown to become one of the most powerful countries of the 21st century. The fact that they are reaching the point of surpassing the United States in arguably the most important area of world dominance can prove how much they've grown. This has caused the US to force a Trade War between the two, with the US taking the bigger 'shots' in the war.

Due to the poor recognition of a potential outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, China was initially hit greatly, with the whole country being a threat at one point, but the Chinese Republic bounced back after the initial stages of the pandemic and is functioning as organized. This has provided an opportunity for them to overtake the United States while they're in a state comparable to anarchy, with health and political controversies. Although China has the opportunity to seize control of the global economy, the US threatens to propose a 'Cold War' between the two to prevent so. One more point that is important to consider is that China is also undertaking great criticism for supposedly having 'concentration camps' to detain people for their ethnicities and religious beliefs.

Russian Federation:

Russia has had conflicts between both China and the United States, but most notably the US, with their Communist past, which led to the first Cold War. Nowadays, Russia has been identified as allied with both nations, but for the most part, it has a closer relationship with China. It has been aligned with the Chinese

since the 1950's, have had the same controversial method to govern their nation, have had less conflict in the past (in comparison with the US), and also share a border.

France:

While France has a bilateral relationship with China, it has been an ally with the United States for much longer, dating back to the end of the 18th century, on February 6th, 1779. France has never had any major conflicts with any of the countries in recent history, but also it has been seen that relations, especially economically, between them and China haven't been the strongest in recent years.

United Kingdom:

The United Kingdom is arguably the United States closest ally, with them having no conflicts and having similar opinions. On the other hand, in recent years, China and the UK have has a friendly relationship, with the UK at one point being "pro-china", but with the recent COVID-19 pandemic that originated in China, the poor handling of the outbreak has provided a sense of 'clarity' to the British, with them realizing a lot of Chinese President Xi Jinping. The recent distaste of the British toward China can also be explained by their loyalty to the United States.

Timeline of Important Events:

January 1st, 2015	Made in China 2025 (MIC 2025) strategic plan is proposed.
December 18th, 2017	Donald Trump's US National Security Strategy targeted China, naming them as threats to US National Security.
February to June 2018	The US and China impose tariffs to impose trades and exports from each country.
July 2018	The beginning of the US-China Trade War,

	<p>where the US imposed a tariff of 25% on US\$34 Billion of Chinese products.</p>
August-September 2018	<p>The US imposes tariffs on US\$200+ Billion on Chinese products, while China has imposed tariffs on US\$70 Billion on US products.</p>
May 2019	<p>The US and China propose 'unreliable entity lists' on products that are from each respective country and are banned in each other. Major Chinese technology companies such as Huawei had all of their products banned from US territory.</p>
November 17th, 2019	<p>The first reported case of the new Coronavirus disease was discovered in the Hubei Province. While there were estimated to have been 4-5 cases, none of them were 'Patient zero'.</p>
December 31st, 2019	<p>Clusters of pneumonia cases were found in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. WHO identified it as a novel of the Coronavirus disease.</p>
January 4th, 2020	<p>WHO published a Disease Outbreak News article on the new virus.</p>
January 13th, 2020	<p>First recorded case of COVID-19 outside of China was identified in Thailand.</p>
January 20th, 2020	<p>First recorded case of COVID-19 in the United States, in the state of Washington.</p>
March 11th, 2020	<p>WHO identifies the spread of COVID-19 as a global pandemic.</p>
March 2020	<p>Towards the end of March, 32 out of the 50 states began going into 'lockdown', effectively shutting down most businesses.</p>
April 20th, 2020	<p>The United States shuts down international borders to travellers who have visited a list of specific countries over the past 14 days.</p>

Relevant Documents and UN Resolutions:

1. Made in China 2025, 1 January 2015
2. US National Security Strategy, 2017 (Donald Trump)
3. Resolution 2532 (Support for Secretary-General's Global Ceasefire Appeal, Fight against COVID-19), 2020
4. "Comprehensive and coordinated response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic" (document A/74/L.92), 2020
5. Omnibus Resolution on Covid 19 Pandemic, General Assembly, 2020

Guiding Questions For Debate:

1. Should China be persecuted for the mismanagement and possible creation of the virus?
2. What is the reliability of US accusations? Should it be persecuted if false?
3. How can the bonds between the 2 countries be strengthened even with their different political structure and corona contingency manners?
4. What measures can be taken to ensure the prevention of a Cold War II? Should they be physical interventions?
5. What is the role of the UN and members of the UNSC to ensure peace is reached? What can countries do to contribute and/or punish?
6. What are the effects of such tensions and possible war on other countries and how should they act upon it in the committee to ensure their views and goals are met?

7. How can measures be taken and sovereignty of both countries be respected at the same time?

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