

**INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE 2021**



# **GROUP OF 14**

## **STUDY GUIDE**

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# INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE 2021

## G14 STUDY GUIDE - CRIMEAN CRISIS

### LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings Delegates,

We welcome you all to The International Youth Conference, 2021. Amidst a pandemic, we believe this online initiative will definitely give you the best opportunity to furnish your skills on the days of quarantine through meeting enthusiasts from around the globe. Model United Nations helps you to develop your public speaking skills, raise awareness towards global issues, you meet a lot of friends, thus, it helps you to grow contacts and last but not the least it helps you to develop as a human being. Therefore, I would like to congratulate you for entering into the right platform for your growth. The dias is expecting heated debates along with productive solutions for the problems that are to be discussed. We hope to see you on the day of the conference.

In this study guide/background guide, we serve you content that is easily understandable for the first-timers. Through this guide, we intend to give you an overview of the agenda at hand. The questions to be addressed provided in the end would give you an idea of what we expect from the committee, and we would prefer these points to be inculcated in your speeches as well as in your final documentation.

Along with the Background Guide, we have also attached various Samples of the Solution-oriented documents and official UNA USA Rules of Procedure that you are required to learn before coming to any MUN conference. We hope that you will be prepared and all set for the conference.

Please note that while you are in the committee, you are world leaders, and we would emphasize upon your diplomacy. Preserving world peace, security and international cooperation has been an integral part of the formation of the United Nations itself. However, the present scenario needs future leaders to negotiate upon the issues of world importance. Model United Nations brings to you the platform wherein you research, understand, manipulate and negotiate. Through this conference, we hope that you develop as a “superhero” for humanity and a “saviour” of a global crisis. We promise a fruitful debate coming your way. I hope all delegates would be able to develop a broad perspective about living in the global society paving way for intellectual solutions.

Dear young leaders, I thank all of you for your commitment and wish you all a most stimulating conference. We anticipate a memorable session with each one of you. We wish you all the very best for the conference.

Regards,  
Ram Bagri- Chair,  
Vedant Gedela- Vice-Chair,  
Akhil Iyer- Moderator,  
Ruhan Bhakta- Rapporteur,  
Yuvna Kumar- R&D Head.



## **INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA**

Crimea was annexed by the Russian Empire during the reign of Catherine the Great in 1783 and remained part of Russia until 1954, when it was transferred to Ukraine under the then Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev.

Ethnic Russians make up the majority of the population, but with significant Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar minorities.

Under Greek and Roman influence for centuries, in 1443 Crimea became the centre of a Tatar Khanate, which later fell under Ottoman control.

Rival imperial ambitions in the mid-19th century led to the Crimean War when Britain and France, suspicious of Russian ambitions in the Balkans as the Ottoman Empire declined, sent troops.

Given autonomous republic status within Russia after the Bolshevik revolution, Crimea was occupied by the Nazis in the early 1940s.

## **CURRENT CRISIS:**

### **1. Tatar Deportation**

Stalin accused the Tatars of collaborating with the German occupiers and deported them en masse to Central Asia and Siberia in 1944. Many did not survive.

Only as the Soviet Union collapsed were they allowed to return. By the time over a quarter of a million did so in the early 1990s, it was to an independent Ukraine where they faced very high unemployment and extremely poor housing conditions.

There were persistent tensions and protests over land rights, and allocation of land to Crimean Tatars was a contentious issue.

After Ukrainian independence, political figures from the local Russian community sought to assert sovereignty and strengthen ties with Russia through a series of moves declared unconstitutional by the Ukrainian government.

The 1996 Ukrainian constitution stipulated that Crimea would have autonomous republic status, but insisted that Crimean legislation must be in keeping with that of Ukraine.

Crimea has its own parliament and government with powers over agriculture, public infrastructure and tourism.

The Crimean Tatars have their own unofficial parliament, the Mejlis, which states its purpose as being to promote the rights and interests of the Crimean Tatars.



## 2. Tensions in the Area

The port of Sevastopol is a major naval base and has been home to the Black Sea Fleet since 1783. Following the collapse of the USSR, the fleet was divided up between Russia and Ukraine.

The continuing presence of the Russian fleet in Sevastopol has been a focus of tension between Russia and Ukraine. In 2008, Ukraine - then under the pro-Western President Viktor Yushchenko - demanded that Moscow not use the Black Sea Fleet during the its conflict with Georgia.

Both countries had agreed to allow the Russian fleet to stay until 2017, but after the election of the pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovych as president in 2010, Ukraine agreed to extend the lease by 25 years beyond 2017, in return for cheaper Russian gas.

Ukraine is a Texas-sized country wedged between Russia and Europe. It was part of the Soviet Union until 1991, and since then has been a less-than-perfect democracy with a very weak economy and foreign policy that wavers between pro-Russian and pro-European.

This all began as an internal Ukrainian crisis in November 2013, when President Viktor Yanukovych rejected a deal for greater integration with the European Union (here's why this was such a big deal), sparking mass protests, which Yanukovych attempted to put down violently. Russia backed Yanukovych in the crisis, while the US and Europe supported the protesters.

Since then, several big things have happened. In February, anti-government protests toppled the government and ran Yanukovych out of the country. Russia, trying to salvage its lost influence in Ukraine, invaded and annexed Crimea the next month. In April, pro-Russia separatist rebels began seizing territory in eastern Ukraine. The rebels shot down Malaysian Airlines flight 17 on July 17, killing 298 people, probably accidentally. Fighting between the rebels and the Ukrainian military intensified, the rebels started losing, and, in August, the Russian army overtly invaded eastern Ukraine to support the rebels. This has all brought the relationship between Russia and the West to its lowest point since the Cold War. Sanctions are pushing the Russian economy to the brink of recession, and more than 2,500 Ukrainians have been killed.



A lot of this comes down to Ukraine's centuries-long history of Russian domination. The country has been divided more or less evenly between Ukrainians who see Ukraine as part of Europe and those who see it as intrinsically linked to Russia. An internal political crisis over that disagreement may have been inevitable. Meanwhile, in Russia, Putin is pushing an imperial-revival, nationalist worldview that sees Ukraine as part of greater Russia — and as the victim of ever-encroaching Western hostility.

It appears unlikely that Ukraine will get Crimea back. It remains unclear whether Russian forces will try to annex parts of eastern Ukraine as well, how the fighting there will end, and what this means for the future of Ukraine — and for Putin's increasingly hostile but isolated Russia.

## **CRIMEA'S ILLEGAL ANNEXATION**

Ukraine's Maidan Revolution ended in late February 2014, when President Victor Yanukovych fled Kyiv — later to turn up in Russia — and the Rada (Ukraine's parliament) appointed an acting president and acting prime minister to take charge. They made clear their intention to draw Ukraine closer to Europe by signing an association agreement with the European Union.

Almost immediately thereafter, armed men began occupying key facilities and checkpoints on the Crimean Peninsula. Clearly professional soldiers by the way they handled themselves and their weapons, they wore Russian combat fatigues but with no identifying insignia. Ukrainians called them "little green men." President Vladimir Putin at first flatly denied these were Russian soldiers, only to later admit that they were and award commendations to their commanders.

The sizeable Ukrainian military presence in Crimea stayed in garrison. If shooting began, Kyiv wanted the world to see the Russians fire first. Ukraine's Western partners urged Kyiv not to take precipitate action. Since many enlisted personnel in the Ukrainian ranks came from Crimea, Ukrainian commanders probably had less than full confidence in the reliability of their troops.

Things moved quickly. By early March, Russian troops had secured the entire peninsula. On March 6, the Crimean Supreme Council voted to ask to accede to Russia. The council scheduled a referendum for March 16, which offered two choices: join Russia or return to Crimea's 1992 constitution, which gave the peninsula significant autonomy. Those who favored Crimea remaining part of Ukraine under the current constitution had no box to check.



The conduct of the referendum proved chaotic and took place absent any credible international observers. Local authorities reported a turnout of 83 percent, with 96.7 percent voting to join Russia. The numbers seemed implausible, given that ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars accounted for almost 40 percent of the peninsula's population. (Two months later, a leaked report from the Russian president's Human Rights Council put turnout at only 30 percent, with about half of those voting to join Russia.)

On March 18, Crimean and Russian officials signed the Treaty of Accession of the Republic of Crimea to Russia. Putin ratified the treaty three days later. Moscow maintains a historical claim to Crimea. The Russians colonized Crimea during the reign of Catherine the Great, and they founded Sevastopol — the peninsula's main port and largest city — to be the homeport for the Russian Black Sea Fleet. Following the establishment of the Soviet Union, Crimea was a part of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic until 1954, when it was transferred administratively to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

It is also true that Crimea in 2014 had an ethnic Russian majority of about 60 percent — the only part of Ukraine where ethnic Russians constituted the majority. But it is equally true that, when the Soviet Union collapsed in December 1991, the resulting independent states recognized one another in their then-existing borders. Russia's seizure of Crimea from Ukraine violated, among other agreements, the UN Charter, the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, the 1994 Budapest Memorandum of Security Assurances for Ukraine and the 1997 Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership between Ukraine and Russia.

Moscow expressed concern about the fate of ethnic Russians in Crimea, but no evidence showed any threat to them. The Russian government justified the referendum and annexation as an act of self-determination, though it appears that well less than half of the Crimean population actually voted to join Russia. In any case, the Kremlin applies the principle of self-determination selectively; Moscow responded to the desire of Chechens for independence from Russia after the Soviet collapse with two bloody conflicts.

It appears that domestic politics provided one motive behind Putin's decision to seize Crimea. He returned to the presidency in 2012 with an economic situation much weaker than during his first two terms as president (2000-2008). Instead of being able to cite economic growth and rising living standards, he based much of his reelection appeal on



Russian nationalism. Seizing Crimea in a quick and relatively bloodless operation proved very popular with the Russian public. Putin's approval rating climbed accordingly.

Crimea has undergone significant changes over the past six years. A large number of ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars — some put the total at 140,000 — have left the peninsula since 2014. Crimean Tatars complain of intimidation and oppression as one reason for moving. During the same period, some 250,000 people have moved from Russia to Crimea (Crimean Tatar leaders claim the influx is much larger). The inflow has included troops and sailors, as the Kremlin has bolstered the Russian military presence on the peninsula, deploying new submarines, surface combatants and combat aircraft among other things.

The economic picture is mixed. Trying to create a success story, Moscow has poured in more than \$10 billion in direct subsidies as well as funding major construction and infrastructure projects, such as the highway and railroad bridges that now cross the Kerch Strait to link Crimea directly to Russia. On the other hand, small business has suffered, particularly with the decline in tourism, which once accounted for about one-quarter of Crimea's economy. Crimea also remains subject to a variety of Western economic and other sanctions. It is probably fair to say that the reality of the economic situation today falls short of what many in Crimea expected, or hoped for, with Russia's annexation.

The ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict in Donbas has pushed Crimea to the back pages, with Kyiv understandably focusing on trying to end that fighting, which claims the lives of Ukrainian soldiers on almost a weekly basis. Still, while Donbas has meant far more dead than Crimea, Crimea's seizure arguably has done as much, if not more, damage to the European security order. A key premise of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and subsequent documents was that state borders should be inviolable and not changed by force; Russia's actions in 2014 shredded that principle. That has caused unease among Russia's other neighbours.

The Ukrainian government maintains that it will get Crimea back. Analytically, it is difficult to see how Kyiv can muster the political, diplomatic, economic and military leverage needed to do so. Perhaps the one possibility would be if Ukraine were to achieve dramatic success in growing its economy, both in absolute terms and relative to the Chechens — and, in any case, Ukraine's economy has a long way to go.



Even if Crimea's return appears implausible in the near term, the United States and Europe should continue to support Kyiv's position, maintain Crimea-related sanctions on Russia, and hold to the policy of non-recognition of Crimea's annexation. Moscow should pay some price for its use of military force to seize the peninsula. That's the right thing to do for Ukraine, for the European security order, and for dissuading the Kremlin from trying land grabs elsewhere.

The West also should remember the case of the Baltic states. For five decades, the United States and other European countries refused to recognize their incorporation into the Soviet Union. For most of that time, the Baltics regaining independence seemed implausible...until it happened.

## **BLOC POSITIONS**

### **Russia**

Russia recognized the short-lived Republic of Crimea as a country shortly before concluding the aforementioned treaty of accession, which was approved by the Constitutional Court of Russia.

Russia claimed the Republic of Crimea (country) as a federal district, the Crimean Federal

District, on the grounds of historical control of the area and the local population's right to self-

determination reflected in the annexation vote.[35] On 28 July 2016 the Crimean Federal District

was abolished and Crimea was included in the Southern Federal District.

### **Ukraine**

The Government of Ukraine did not recognize the Republic of Crimea's claim to sovereignty, nor the unification of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea with Sevastopol, nor the referendum that paved the way for Crimean secession.

The Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally displaced persons is a

government ministry in Ukraine that was officially established on 20 April 2016 [34] to manage

occupied parts of Donetsk, Luhansk and Crimea regions affected by Russian military intervention of 2014.



## **PRO-RUSSIAN STANCES IN CRIMEA**

The following members of the United Nations have taken pro-Russian stances on Crimea, making official statements of support at the United Nations. Also, some countries, like India, have voted against the situation of human rights in Crimea but did not vote against Ukraine's territorial integrity in 2014 or 2018 and so are not listed below

### **Afghanistan**

President Hamid Karzai said, "We respect the decision the people of Crimea took through a recent referendum that considers Crimea as part of the Russian Federation".

### **Armenia**

On 7 March, President Serzh Sargsyan stated at the European People's Party session in Dublin that the "Ukrainian events are a matter of serious concern to all of us". He called "to take all possible measures in order to ease the tension and find reasonable solutions by the means of a dialogue". During a phone conversation with Putin on 19 March, President Serzh Sargsyan said the referendum in Crimea was an exercise of peoples' right to self-determination via free expression of will.

### **Bolivia**

Under President Evo Morales, Bolivia voted against the resolution pertaining to Ukraine's territorial integrity and voted against the resolution reaffirming non-recognition of Russia's annexation in 2017. In 2016, Morales declared his support for Russia on Crimea.

### **Cuba**

Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez condemned what he called "the hypocrisy, the double standards and the aggression" of Washington and NATO over the ouster of Yanukovich and warned against any attempt to extend NATO's reach to Russia's borders which he considered to be a flagrant violation of international law and the UN Charter and a threat to peace, security and global stability. Cuba has officially recognized Crimea as a part of Russia.



### **Kyrgyzstan**

Kyrgyzstan recognizes the 2014 Crimean status referendum

### **Nicaragua**

On 27 March, Nicaragua officially recognized Crimea as a part of Russia.

### **North Korea**

15 March, North Korean ambassador to Russia Kim Yong-jae expressed support for Russia's position.

### **Sudan**

Nadir Yusuf Babiker, the Sudanese ambassador to Russia, announced recognition of Crimea as part of the Russian Federation. According to him, Sudan believes that the Crimean referendum complies with international law. The ambassador added that representatives of his country's business circles are planning to take part in the upcoming Yalta Economic Forum.

Syria President Bashar al Assad expressed support for Putin's efforts to "restore security and stability in the friendly country of Ukraine." Syria has officially recognized Crimea as a part of Russia.

### **Venezuela**

On 7 March, the Foreign Ministry released a statement which said President Nicolas Maduro "condemns the coup perpetrated by extremist groups in Ukraine following an attrition strategy promoted from abroad by the government of the United States and its NATO allies." It further stated, "the installation in Kyiv of de facto authorities not only threatens Ukraine's national unity, but the stability of the entire region as it places in danger Ukrainian citizens of Russian origin and the Russian Federation's own sovereignty."

### **Zimbabwe**

On 22 December 2014, Zimbabwe's Minister of the Environment Saviour Kasukuwere became the first non-Russian politician to visit Crimea since its March 2014 annexation "to offer advice on how to deal with international sanctions".[56] Zimbabwe had also voted against the March 2014 United Nations General Assembly Resolution 68/262 aimed at recognizing Crimea within Ukraine's borders and underscored the invalidity of the 2014 Crimean referendum.



## **PAST UN RESOLUTIONS**

The General Assembly this morning adopted three resolutions dealing with the prevention of armed conflict and global health and foreign policy, including one urging the Russian Federation to withdraw from Crimea and another that declared 27 December as an International Day of Epidemic Preparedness.

By a vote of 63 in favour to 17 against, with 62 abstentions, it adopted the resolution “Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov” (document A/75/L.38/Rev.1).

Through that text, it urged the Russian Federation, as the occupying Power, to immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw its military forces from Crimea and end its temporary occupation of the territory of Ukraine without delay.

Ukraine’s representative, who introduced the text, said that by occupying Crimea and turning it into a powerful military outpost, the Russian Federation is violating international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Moscow’s growing military presence on the peninsula represents a threat to peace and security well beyond the Black Sea region, he added.

The Russian Federation’s representative, in an explanation of position before the vote, underscored the politicized nature of the draft. For a third year, he said, the Assembly was being distracted by a text put forth by Ukraine, even though the people of Crimea have already decided its future through a referendum.

Acting without a vote, the Assembly adopted the resolution “International Day of Epidemic Preparedness” (document A/75/L.8), proclaiming 27 December as a day to highlight the importance of the prevention of, preparedness for and partnerships against epidemics.

Its adoption came on the heels of a two-day special session of the Assembly devoted to the COVID-19 pandemic. (See Press Releases GA/12293 and GA/12294.)

Vietnam’s representative, who introduced the text, said COVID-19 is not the first epidemic that the world has faced in recent years, nor will it be the last. “The pandemic caught us off guard, but it also has served as a wake-up call for improving our preparedness.” Observing an International Day on Epidemic Preparedness can help achieve that goal, he said.



Also acting without a vote, the Assembly adopted the resolution titled “The role and importance of a policy of neutrality in maintaining and strengthening international peace, security and sustainable development” (document A/75/L.31).

Turkmenistan’s representative, who introduced the draft, underscored the experience of neutral States in such areas as mediation, conflict prevention and easing global tensions. He also noted the text’s reference to his country hosting a conference devoted to the International Day of Neutrality on 12 December.

Also speaking this morning were representatives of Malaysia, Singapore, Cuba, India, Syria and Azerbaijan as well as the European Union.

Also speaking in explanation of position were representatives of the United States, Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), United Kingdom, Singapore, Belarus, Indonesia, Iran and Algeria.

The representative of the Russian Federation spoke in exercise of the right of reply.

### **Questions a Resolution Must Answer -**

- 1) Will the Crimean region be a part of Russia, Ukraine or will it operate as a sovereign state?
- 2) What action will be taken regarding Russian troops currently occupying the region?
- 3) What measures will be taken to improve the living standards of Crimea such as maintaining a constant supply of drinking water? (Currently, Ukraine blocked the North Crimean canal which supplied Crimea 85% of its water before annexation)