

HISTORICAL

Georgia Tech Model of United Nations

Committee
Congress of Vienna



Regional and Specialized Bodies

October 14-15, 2024

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#GTMUN2024



Letter from the Secretary General

Dear esteemed delegates,

Welcome to the twentyfifth edition of the Georgia Model of United Nations. I am incredibly excited to be your Secretary General for GTMUN 2024!

My first Model UN conference was GTMUN, six years ago, and it's given me a joy and passion for diplomacy that has lasted since. This year, the secretariat team has worked extraordinarily hard for months to assemble an incredible array of committees and topics to test your abilities and push you to grow as a delegate and as a future leader. As a person who was in your position six years ago, reading the GTMUN background guides, I know how it feels to prepare for a committee. Though this resource is invaluable, I encourage you to go beyond in terms of studying about your topic(s) and your country's diplomatic position. I firmly believe that the greatest moments in Model UN happen when you have resiliently prepared through different resources to bring your member state's view into the committee. It is a sincere hope of mine that you enjoy the conference, and take the fullest advantage of what GTMUN has to offer, from public speaking skills, to critical thinking and policy creation. It is opportunities like these when you can connect with fellow, like-minded delegates to bring ideas into the table and construct the progress that people across the globe need, and that only the United Nations can deliver.

GTMUN is an amazing chance to brainstorm to solve current issues creatively and practicing being the leader of tomorrow. I wish you the best in preparing for and participating at the upcoming conference!



GTMUN XXV Secretary General
Jonah Isaza

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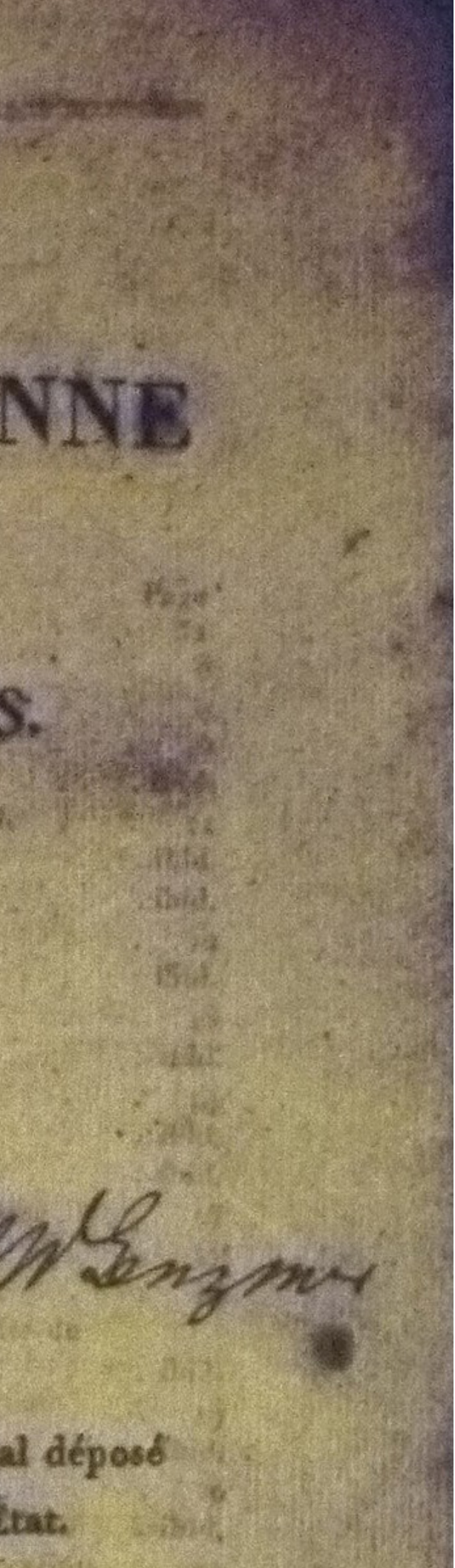
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Foreword: Historiography

This background guide, while broad in scope and comprehensive enough for the purposes of GTMUN XXV, should not be taken as a definitive source on the subject. This background guide utilizes conventional interpretations of the Congress of Vienna that were popularized alongside realism in the mid-20th century. However, this approach, particularly around the impact of these diplomatic systems, is being challenged by more recent literature and new revisionist schools of thought that have moved away from realism. Since much of modern international relations is predicated upon it, the Congress of Vienna and the Westphalian system underlying it remain contentious topics in both history and international relations. The dais highly recommends looking further into the bibliography and other scholarly works for a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the Congress of Vienna and its legacy.

Position Papers

A position paper is a document which expresses a member state's policy or position regarding the topic(s) that will be discussed in the committee. It can also help as a forefront to ideas, perspectives, solutions, or approaches that a delegate expects to prioritize in committee. It is recommended that a position paper includes the following: **a) member state's view on the topic(s), b) information on how the nation has addressed (or not) the issue in the past, c) proposed solutions based on research and policy.**

Sample Position Paper

The United Mexican States

Committee: Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Topic Area: Heroin Trafficking

"My sole ambition is to rid Mexico of the class that has oppressed her and giving the people a chance to know what real liberty means. And if I could bring that about today by giving up my life, I would do it gladly"

Although "El Centauro del Norte" spoke these words during the Mexican Revolution more than a century ago, the Mexican people are far from knowing the meaning of "real liberty". Mexico is suffering the consequences of being a key player and a large contributor in a growing illicit drug market, which each year seems to be more diversified and more difficult to trace. Mexico's protagonic and problematic stance provoked former president, Felipe Calderón, to declare open a new theater of the War against Drugs in 2006, as a strategy to counter the violence of the cartels. The low-intensity conflict has left a toll of more than 150.000 deaths and 23.000 disappearances. These painful numbers have placed Mexico as the second most dangerous country in the world.

Currently, drug trafficking and organized crime industry in Mexico is like energy: it is not destroyed, but transformed from one form to another, since each cartel dismantled by the Mexican Government gives way to more small and irrepressible groups. The strategy of the war on drugs, which was based on punctual operations to eliminate the highest branches of the cartels, has not had the desired results.

Mexico recognizes that instead of addressing the problem by the branches, we must change our strategy and attack it from its roots. The first step is understanding that fiercely repressing the violence of the cartels only results in the bloodshed and loss of precious lives of innocent citizens. We invite fellow representatives to consider our modern history, experiences and learnings as a reference.

The United Mexican States notes the necessity to promote the enhancement of international cooperation and exchange of information with the purpose of strengthening the common front in the face of transnational organized crime. For this reason, we must take the responsibility of attending and repairing the social damage of vulnerable communities that are bonded with illicit drug markets. Furthermore, we must develop integral prevention programs against violence, exclusion and weakening of the social tissue, aiming towards the most vulnerable demographics.

TOPIC 1

Congress of Vienna



Historical Background

The late 18th century was a time of upheaval and revolt, as the Napoleonic Wars swept across Europe and completely upended the previous European order established at Westphalia. The destruction Napoleon has left in his wake has made the previous system of diplomacy in Europe, established in the wake of the Thirty Years War in Westphalia, completely untenable. In order to maintain the balance of power, the Congress must address the three changes that have left the Peace of Westphalia obsolete: the end of the Holy Roman Empire, the altered status of the Great Powers of Europe, and the ever-present specter of revolution.

The Westphalian System

The aftermath of the devastating Thirty Years War saw the authorities of the two dominant organizations in European international relations, the Holy Roman Empire and the Catholic Church, severely weakened, leaving a power vacuum in its

midst (Gross 26-27). As a result, the parties involved in the Thirty Years War convened, both to end the conflict that had exhausted the entire continent, and to establish a new status quo to prevent a similar war from happening again. To do so, the delegations present at the two Westphalian treaties drew upon informal trends already occurring with European states and the ideas of Hugo Grotius to establish the individual state as the foundational unit of international law, instead of the Papacy or the Holy Roman Emperor (26).

Critical to the existence of the Westphalian state was the idea of balance of power, a concept not formally defined before this, where all of Europe should be locked into an equilibrium as to retain the independence and sovereignty of the states. In addition, the Peace of Westphalia also mandated that “peace shall remain in force” and that all signatories were “obliged to defend and protect” the peace (24). Combined, these two tenets of maintaining the balance of power and peace resulted in a period of relative stability that avoided continent-spanning wars like the Thirty Years War.



The Battle of Austerlitz

Revolutionary France & The Napoleonic Wars

GTMUN 2024

The French Revolution marked the beginning of the destabilization of the Peace of Westphalia, with both the revolutionaries and the monarchies no longer seeking to maintain peace. To the revolutionaries who seized control of France, many in the National Assembly, the new legislative body of France, were paranoid of the monarchical response to their revolution, where they believed an invasion to restore the status quo was inevitable (Bell 111-112). More radical factions in the National Assembly also believed in a war of national liberation, seeking to forcibly topple monarchies and install similar republics across the rest of Europe (115). Similarly, the European monarchs, particularly Prussia and Austria, also feared the revolution spreading from

France into their own borders and believed that the new National Assembly was unstable and could be easily toppled by a short expedition.

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Tensions flared until they boiled over in August 1890, when the Austro-Prussian forces released the Brunswick Manifesto threatening retaliation if harm came to the Royal Family and the revolutionaries subsequently stormed the Tuileries Palace, capturing and deposing the French monarchy (128-129). This period of radicalization eroded the Westphalian commitment to enforcing peace, as both the revolutionaries and the counterrevolutionaries believed that the mere presence of the other faction posed an existential threat to their own

sovereignty. In such a scenario, neither party desired peace, let alone wanted to maintain peace, resulting in a continent-spanning war erupting.

The other aspect of the Napoleonic Wars that ended Westphalia was the unprecedented military superiority of both Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, which completely upended the balance of power that was the other core tenet of the relative peace maintained since 1648. The levée en masse, the policy of mass conscription in Europe, was the first major innovation of France, effectively conscripting every young male French citizen into the army. Despite high desertion rates and issues equipping the newly conscripted soldiers, the policy resulted in the French army swelling to an unprecedented 750,000 men that was on par with the size of the First Coalition's army despite the latter having a much larger civilian base to draw upon (148-149). When Napoleon Bonaparte assumed power, he introduced a set of organizational reforms such as total mobilization of the national economy, skirmishers, and the army corps, able to decisively outperform the rigid line-and-column formations utilized by the Coalition forces (233-234). With these military reforms, Napoleon was able to win an unprecedented series of campaigns and wars for the next decade, emerging victorious even when the rest of Europe was arrayed against him. The ability for one nation to fight against all other nations

of Europe and win decisively proved that the post-Westphalia informal agreements and independent diplomatic maneuvering were unable to maintain the necessary balance of power.

Changes in the Balance of Power

The impact of the Napoleonic Wars is not only felt in the destabilization of the ideological underpinnings of Westphalia, but also the material changes in the status of a wide variety of European powers, whose fortunes have waned or waxed depending on their performance during the Napoleonic Wars.

Ever since the Thirty Years War, the Holy Roman Empire has been in a steady state of decline, as its city states turned into the playground of other great powers and the decentralized nature of the Empire failed to present a united front against the other great powers. Following the crushing French victory at Austerlitz in 1805, the next year saw the official dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire and its replacement with the French-dominated Confederation of the Rhine (Mikaberidze 214). The end of the Holy Roman Empire and the dismantling of

the successive Confederation of the Rhine means that a wide variety of city-states and small kingdoms are left without a broader allegiance, and the Congress must decide what spheres of influence they should fall under and whether it be united as a new confederation or divided among various spheres of influence.

The British Empire has perhaps enjoyed the greatest success in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, emerging as a naval hegemon who enjoys nearly unchallenged naval supremacy. No other country possesses a larger navy nor empire, and with the rest of India poised to fall, the British Empire is only set to become even larger. Many of the overseas territories the British currently occupy are both financially lucrative and strategically essential, and part of the purpose of the Congress is to determine which of these seized lands Britain is to relinquish and which they can hold onto (624).

Conversely, the Iberian powers of Spain and Portugal are shadows of their former selves. The powers that had once divided the entire power between them at Tordesillas had their metropolises devastated by the Peninsular War, with some settlements losing as much as half their population and farmland due to the devastation inflicted by the war (Mikaberidze 629). With the metropolises in utter ruin, revolutionaries spurred on by the ideas of the French

Revolution and the lack of central authority have gained significant traction, leading to calls for independence and even outright revolts (631). Even if they can put down the revolts and restore Spanish or Portuguese rule over their colonies, both empires have the long task of rebuilding and recovery ahead of them, and they are in no place to impose their will upon a broader part of Europe.

In the east, the once-mighty Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth is no more, as Russia and Prussia took advantage of the French Revolution to partition its final territories between the two nations without any objection from the traditional mediators and its allies of France and Austria (35-36). In its place stand the two partitioning powers, Prussia and Russia. Despite being geographically smaller than many other great powers, Prussia's militarism has enabled it to punch well-above their weight, with many describing the kingdom as a "army with a state." Despite a brief humiliation at Jena-Auerstedt, the Prussian state and army were both able to quickly modernize and played a key role in the 6th Coalition War and the Hundred Days Campaign (303-306). Russia, however, is perhaps the single greatest contributor to the defeat of Napoleon, and the invasion of Russia demonstrated that the empire is a far cry from the backwaters it previously was. It was in Russia that Napoleon lost much of his Grand Armee to disastrous

effect, and the Russians fought in every campaign thereafter that eventually led to Napoleon's final exile (539-540).

One final item to consider is France. Despite being defeated, they still possess the industry, population, and military experience to remain the premier land military power on the continent. The final actions of Napoleon as the Allied powers converged on Paris showed that the Grand Armee, despite having been decimated in Russia and at Leipzig, was still able to fend off a force several times its number and even score significant victories, and the nation's lands had not suffered significantly as campaigns were fought away from the French metropole (579). Although years of losses diminished Napoleon's popularity substantially, the ill will against the newly restored Bourbon dynasty remained strong two decades on from the Revolution. Compounding this issue was the Bourbon support base of the Ultras, a group of radical monarchists seeking to restore the pre-Revolution status quo (602). With Louis XVIII caught between hardliner monarchists and a population not willing to give up the liberties they earned in the French Revolution, resentment against the Bourbons continues to fester, to the point where many French citizens would welcome back Napoleon with open arms. With both the means and the will to continue fighting, a Carthaginian peace may risk the French leaving the conference

and continuing the bloodshed that all factions seek to avoid after two decades of warfare.

The 1814 Treaties and the Congress of Vienna



Napoleon I at Fontainebleau on March 31, 1814; depicting Napoleon during his abdication of the throne

In 1814, with multiple armies converging from all directions towards Paris, France finally sought peace with the victorious powers of Great Britain, Prussia, Austria,

and Russia. Tsar Alexander I of Russia and the Prussians negotiated with Napoleon the Treaty of Fontainebleau, although the Austrians arrived late to the treaty discussions and the British arrived too late to even be signatories or participate in the debate around Napoleon's fate, owing to travel time. This Treaty stipulated the terms of Napoleon's surrender, primarily his exile to the tiny island of Elba off of Italy, although both the Austrian Prince Metternich and the British Lord Castlereigh objected to the terms, with the latter predicting that the exile risking a new war due to the island's proximity to continental Europe (Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 140). However, the most important of the treaties, the Treaty of Paris, was negotiated with all parties in attendance from the beginning of negotiations. This treaty was generally lenient, with France generally reverting to its 1792 borders aside from the cession of several Caribbean colonies to Britain and Spain, as well as renouncing any claims it had on other parts of Europe. In addition, no reparations, governmental, or military restrictions were imposed on France bar the continuation of the newly restored Bourbon monarchy in France (142). The leniency of the treaty is in large part due to the intention of the victorious powers to integrate a reformed France into the post-Napoleonic balance of power, as well as engendering a spirit of reconciliation to ensure that the Bourbon France did not fall to another revolution that would destabilize

the continent again (142-143).

However, the Treaty of Paris only established peace between the major powers and did not deal with the political turmoil and territorial disputes across Europe that Napoleon left in his wake. As a result, the treaty stipulated a broader, pan-European conference that was to take place later in Vienna to resolve all issues the Treaty of Paris glossed over and establish a new post-Napoleonic diplomatic and political order across Europe.

Motivations of the Convening Powers

Nearly all the major attendees are some type of monarchy, and the French Revolution is an apocalyptic scenario that every monarchy should strive to avoid, lest their own heads be rolling off the guillotine. However, industrialization has made it clear that the French Revolution was not a one-off event. In the Americas, many of the revolutionaries are using the same battle cries of liberty and freedom that the French used, and Luddites are wrecking factories across England at this very moment. The means of production are shifting from the landed aristocracy to the

bourgeoisie, as factories become greater producers than farms and craft workshops, resulting in a new class that has both significant wealth but lacks representation (Mikaberidze 616-617). Meanwhile, the creative destruction of the industrial revolution has resulted in the livelihoods of many in the countryside being upheaved for a more exploitative and dangerous job in the factories, resulting in widespread resentment among the working class, as exemplified by the Luddites (Horn 165). Vienna must reestablish the monarchical legitimacy lost by the devastation and changes inflicted by Napoleon in order to maintain the current political order against the forces unleashed by the Napoleonic Wars and the Industrial Revolution. Although suppressing revolution is more of a domestic affair outside the scope of a diplomatic conference, the risk of another Revolutionary France emerging and taking on the whole of Europe means that some mechanism must be in place to suppress the revolution and present a united front against revolutionaries, lest the kingdoms of Europe fall to the guillotine divided and one after another.

Another thing to note is that all parties involved wish to form a new balance of power to create some sort of equilibrium in Europe, but every nation envisions this balance of power differently (Kissinger, *The Congress of Vienna*, 266-267). Some nations may wish to seek a true balance

of power that prevents any country from becoming the dominant force in Europe, while others only seek to contain regional rivals, and other nations may seek continental hegemony themselves and replicate Napoleon's domination of Europe. The nature of any nation's ideal balance of power depends on their relative power, geographical position, commercial interests, and their existing historical grievances. For instance, a minor power would be interested in establishing a true balance of power preventing any hegemon from rising to be able to maintain their independence, while a great power may be interested in a more uneven balance favoring them and disadvantageing their rivals.

The final major consideration should be historical and modern rivalries between nations. The most prominent of these rivalries are those in central and eastern Europe, with the disruption of Napoleon's victories leaving the regions in a confusing situation while multiple different powers seek to exert control and gain satellites and territories in a post-Napoleonic Europe. Prussia and Russia both have set their eyes on Poland, Austria vies against Prussia for hegemony over the new states of Germany no longer under the yoke of the Holy Roman Empire, and Austria and Russia both seek to bring the nations of the Balkans under their spheres of influence (Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 270). These

nations will not tolerate their rivals making unequivocal gains that would increase any power disparity between the rivals, such as Austria gaining Polish territory without Russia or Prussia being likewise compensated. Thus, compromises and exchanges must be formed to satisfy all parties and form a lasting peace in spite of the drastically different objectives and interests of these rivals.

Historical Importance



Assassination of Franz Ferdinand, which set forth the series of events and the diplomatic failures of Vienna culminating in the First World War

The Congress of Vienna will set diplomatic precedent for the next century and a balance

of power that would be acknowledged for decades to come. Historically, the Congress resulted in such a favorable settlement for all parties involved that the powers involved were committed to defending the established status quo and prevented continental-spanning wars for nearly a century (Langhorne 315). In addition, this peace held despite fundamental changes such as industrialization; the formation of new Great Powers such as the United States, Germany, and Japan; and the formation of mass divergences between many ideologies. Nonetheless, the treaty failed to prevent all wars, and colonial wars and individual great power conflicts generally continued unabated. The Congress of Vienna would falter in the aftermath of the 1848 Revolutions, then fail during the Crimean War, as Britain and France supported the Ottomans against Russia, resulting in multiple great powers joining a war, albeit a limited one generally restrained to the Crimean Peninsula (Albrecht-Renee 159-160). Nonetheless, the principles of Vienna lived on in the conferences that concluded the Crimean War established a precedent of conferences to resolve international disputes as well as the continuing formalization of international law during this period (191-192). However, the informal mechanisms established at Vienna would finally collapse in July 1914, when the mechanisms and balances defined by the congress failed to prevent the assassination of Franz Ferdinand from

spiraling into the First World War (359-360). As a result, the attending parties can shape history for better or for worse. They can establish a better treaty system that outright prevents war, or they can ensure their nation achieves their geopolitical goals, ensuring regional or even continental dominance. Alternatively, the congress could fail, resulting in instability and a resumption of the wars that had consumed Europe in the past decade. Regardless of the outcome, delegates should factor in the historical context of the Congress in the Westphalian System that failed, the changes caused by the Napoleonic Wars, and the motivations of other delegations who are also present at Vienna. The continent lies on a precipice, and actions can either pull Europe back from the brink for good, or see the continent engulfed in the flames of war once again.

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