

# Security Council A

*Specialized  
Advanced*



**TOPICS:** Accountability for War Crimes, Building Long-Term Peace and Stability in Syria  
**CHAIRS:** Sophia Peña and Riley Miller

*LAIMUN XXXI*

*December 6-7*



Letter from the Secretaries-General

3

Letter from the Undersecretary-General

4

Introduction to the Dais

5

Committee Description

10

Topic A: Accountability for War Crimes

11

Topic B: Building Long-Term Peace and Stability in  
Syria

30



## Letter from the Secretaries-General

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of our entire staff, it is our pleasure to welcome you to Session XXXI of the Los Angeles Invitational Model United Nations (LAIMUN) conference. LAIMUN XXXI will take place on Saturday, December 6 and Sunday, December 7 of 2025 at the Mira Costa High School (MCHS) campus.

Our staff, composed of over 200 MCHS students, has been working tirelessly to make your debate experience the best it can be. You will find your dais members to be knowledgeable about the issues being debated and MUN procedure. We pride ourselves in hosting a conference that is educational and engaging, and we hope you take advantage of that as you prepare and debate.

At LAIMUN, we value thorough research and preparation. We ask that delegates write position papers following these directions. The deadline to submit position papers to be considered for Committee and Research Awards is Friday, November 21st at 11:59 PM PT. The deadline to submit to be considered for Committee Awards is Thursday, November 28th at 11:59 PM PT.

We also encourage all delegates to read the LAIMUN Rules of Procedure for conference-specific information and as a reminder of points and motions that can be made during committee.

Feel free to reach out to our staff with any questions or concerns you may have. Delegates can find their chairs' contact information next to their committee profile and the Secretariat's email addresses on the staff page. Any member of the LAIMUN staff will be happy to assist you.

We look forward to seeing you in December!

Sincerely,

Katie Anderson and Isabel Boroch  
Secretaries-General, LAIMUN XXXI  
[secretarygeneral@mchsmun.org](mailto:secretarygeneral@mchsmun.org)



## Letter from the Undersecretary-General

Hello Delegates!

Welcome to LAIMUN XXXI! My name is Collin Tarnay, and I am very excited to be your Under-Secretary General of Specialized Committees. This is my 4th year of Mira Costa MUN, and I am thrilled to be your USG.

This year for Specialized, we have chosen a set of current, pressing, and unique topics and committees ranging from IMO to Ad Hoc. I'm looking forward to seeing creative solutions and engaging debate in all of your committees! Our chairs have worked extremely hard this year to prepare for LAIMUN XXXI, and we hope you can return that same level of respect and effort.

With Specialized's variety of relevant topics means that uncomfortable discussions can be created. We would like to ensure that everyone feels safe and heard in committee, and we hope that all delegates remain respectful, diplomatic, and civil. Please ensure you are following LAIMUN's guidelines for committee conduct, and I would like to reiterate that the use of plagiarism, AI, or pre-written operatives is strictly prohibited.

Whether you are in a novice committee or an advanced one, I hope you will have an amazing debate experience. Don't forget to submit your position papers, prepare for debate, and research your topic! If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact your chairs, our SGs, or me at [specialized@mchsmun.org](mailto:specialized@mchsmun.org). Committee information and conference resources will be available at the LAIMUN XXXI website at <https://www.laimun.org/>. See you in committee and I hope you will enjoy what is, in my unbiased opinion, the best branch at LAIMUN!

Best of Luck,  
Collin Tarnay  
USG of Specialized Committees.



## Introduction to the Dais

Hello Delegates!

My Name is Sophia Pena and I will be your head chair for Advanced Security Council at LAIMUN XXXI this year! I am a Senior here at Mira Costa, and this is my fourth year in the MUN program. Throughout my time in the program, I have traveled to Montreal, Canada for SSUNS (favorite debate of all time), and New York for NHSMUN, and this year I am a freshman TA. This is my second year chairing Advanced Security Council for LAIMUN, and I also debated in this exact committee my freshman year!

On campus I am super involved with ASB, having been a 2026 class officer for three years, and the ASB secretary and board member this year! I am also a part of the varsity cheer team, a second year link crew leader, and an avid member of the Historical Debate club. Off campus, you can probably find me watching *The Summer I Turned Pretty*, shopping, or listening to Romy Mars. I also LOVE musical theatre (my favorite play is *Hadestown*).

Throughout committee, we are hoping to see creative yet feasible solutions that align with country policy very well. Both topics for debate are very serious issues with a plethora of just as important subtopics and details which we hope to see addressed through credible policy and collaboration, as being on policy is imperative to maintaining a sensible and coherent debate. We are also looking for authenticity and passion whilst speaking, which can be best conveyed by



confidence and assertion. I am looking forward to meeting you all, and I wish you the best of luck on your upcoming research.



Hi Delegates!

My name is Riley Miller, and I'm super excited to be one of your chairs for Security Council A at LAIMUN XXXI! This is my fourth year at Mira Costa, and also my fourth year in the Model UN program. This is my 3rd year being on the staff for LAIMUN, but my first time chairing a specialized debate! While I haven't chaired a specialized debate, Security Council is one of my favorite committees to debate in! Security Council was the first committee I ever debated in as a freshman, and to this day, that was one of my all-time favorite conferences. Between the duel delegate style, crucial topics, and 3-minute speeches, what's not to love!

Outside of Model UN, I am the Varsity Cheer captain, I'm the President of the club for the ocean therapy organization, Jimmy Miller Memorial Foundation, and I am also the Secretary of the Taylor Swift Society here at Costa! Outside of school, I am a huge fan of true crime, and I plan to major in criminal psychology when I attend college next year. One of my other hobbies is bracelet making, specifically beaded ones! Lastly, I am also attempting, and mostly failing, to learn guitar. If you have any helpful hints about guitar or would like to suggest beginner songs, I would greatly appreciate it!

During LAIMUN, I am looking forward to seeing well-developed chemistry between partners during speeches and unique solutions! Both Accountability for War Crimes and Building Long-Term Peace and Stability and Syria are serious topics that deal with thousands of real people's livelihoods, so we are looking to keep solutions serious and impactful. While it is important to let your personality shine through your speech, it is absolutely imperative to remain



aligned with your country's policy to have a valid debate. I am super excited to see all of you during committee, and even more excited to hear what you have to say to solve these pertinent issues.

# LAIMUN XXXI



**For Research Award and Committee Award consideration, email your position paper to your dais by Friday, November 21 at 11:59 PM PT**

**For Committee Award consideration, email your position paper to your dais by Friday, November 28 at 11:59 PM PT**



## Committee Description

Established on October 24, 1945, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) stands as one of the 6 vital branches of the United Nations. With each branch obtaining its own unique features that drive the United Nations as an entire entity, the UNSC is centred at implementing peace and security throughout the international community. Moreover, the Security Council can implement decisions that must be adopted by member states, ranging from imposing sanctions to even authorizing international military action.

Historically, the UNSC has worked at conflict resolution, as it was established to prevent future conflicts similar to that of the Second World War. Uniquely, the UNSC has numerous features that set it apart from other, typical committees. For starters, Security Council committees are relatively smaller than most, with 15 delegations, 10 being temporary and chosen every 2 years, and the other 5 being permanent. These 5 countries, otherwise known as the “Big Five,” include The United States of America, The United Kingdom, The Russian Federation, The People’s Republic of China, and The French Republic. These 5 permanent members are the only members with veto power in a resolution. This veto power has been used over 300 times, and is often used to serve the strategic interests of the nation using it, instead of being used for the betterment of all the nations involved. The Veto entails that, regardless of majority rule, if a Big 5 member nation exercises it, the resolution will not be adopted under any circumstances.



## Topic A: Accountability for War Crimes

### I. Background

War crime frequency has seen a rapid increase in recent years. With the international community frequently engaging in violent, widespread conflict, it is seemingly inevitable that war crimes occur in the midst of chaos. Internationally, the rules of war, or, humanitarian laws, are legal systems put in place regarding armed conflict. The most common breaches of these laws include torture, civilian attacks, destruction of civic infrastructure, and sexual violence. With this, it is imperative war crimes are not only tracked, but given consequences as well. In order to do this, a variety of mechanisms of accountability are utilized, each at varying levels. At the national level, the Geneva Conventions and the International Criminal Court (ICC) requires states to maintain some form of domestic legislation, allowing for the prosecution of war crimes at a domestic rank.<sup>1</sup> On the international level, the ICC holds individuals accountable through trials regarding war crimes when national courts are unable or unwilling to do so.<sup>2</sup> The Rome Statute of the ICC is the founding treaty in which the ICC was created, establishing the courts' authority.<sup>3</sup> The Rome Statute also outlines and categorizes offenses in the context of their actions, serving as a baseline for trials and prosecution in national courts. Within a national

---

<sup>1</sup> *IHL*, [ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-1977/article-51?activeTab=default](https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-1977/article-51?activeTab=default). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

<sup>2</sup> *About the Court*, [www.icc-cpi.int/about/the-court](https://www.icc-cpi.int/about/the-court). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

<sup>3</sup> *How the Court Works*, [www.icc-cpi.int/about/how-the-court-works](https://www.icc-cpi.int/about/how-the-court-works). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.



court, countries are given the option to exercise criminal jurisdiction regarding international crimes by enacting statutes that “mirror” the outlined descriptions in the Rome Statute.<sup>4</sup>

Consequences of war crimes are relevant to the level of crime committed, and the court it is brought to. A variety of evidence is required to verify or qualify a war crime to be brought on trial. Thus, Civil Rights Defenders, a politically and religiously independent human rights organisation based in Stockholm, Sweden, actively collaborates with other organisations in effort to collect said evidence, including photographs, testimonies, and videos. This evidence is utilized in future trials, where Civil Rights Defenders then prepare concrete evidence files to identify perpetrators. In addition to conventional forms of prosecution, The United States of America (USA) has also created the War Crimes Rewards Program, which offers an incentivization of \$5 Million USD to those with information regarding war crimes on an active trial.<sup>5</sup> Individuals are given the opportunity to approach the program directly with their information regarding the conviction of the designated individuals. In recent developments, the 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act committed roughly \$10 Million USD to the Office of Global Criminal Justice to emphasize “accountability for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes”.

---

<sup>4</sup> *Understanding-the-Icc.Pdf*, [www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/understanding-the-icc.pdf](http://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/understanding-the-icc.pdf). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

<sup>5</sup>“Accountability for International Crimes.” *ASIL Task Force on Policy Options for U.S. Engagement with the ICC*,



In addition to this, the USA also enacted the Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991, which permitted the exercise of civil lawsuits in U.S. courts against individuals under semblance of a foreign nation that subjected someone to torture or legally unwarranted homicide.<sup>6</sup>

## II. UN Involvement

Historically, the United Nations (UN) has advocated its involvement, along with the involvement of member states regarding the accountability of war crimes. Most notably, promoting treaties (such as the Rome Statute), establishing fact-finding commissions, developing legal outlines, and advocating for member states to fulfill their duties in holding prosecutors accountable. In regards to the promotion of the Rome statute, the UN not only hosted its signing ceremonies, but has also established its relationship and agreement through cooperation agreements with the ICC. The UN also helped the ICC in establishing the Rome Statute at its Conference of Plenipotentiaries.<sup>7</sup>

Further, the UN also continuously upheld commissions and tribunals to investigate violations of international law through the establishment of various global fact-finding mechanisms. These tribunals, whilst remaining independent, contribute significantly to the UN's justice architecture, as it holds offenders accountable as seen in former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

The Yugoslavia and Rwanda tribunals were tribunals under the UN Ad Hoc to prosecute

---

<sup>6</sup> *H.R.2092 - 102nd Congress (1991-1992): Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991* | Congress.Gov | Library of Congress, [www.congress.gov/bill/102nd-congress/house-bill/2092](http://www.congress.gov/bill/102nd-congress/house-bill/2092). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

<sup>7</sup> *ICC - Agreement between the International Criminal Court and the United Nations* | International Criminal Court, [www.icc-cpi.int/news/icc-agreement-between-international-criminal-court-and-united-nations](http://www.icc-cpi.int/news/icc-agreement-between-international-criminal-court-and-united-nations). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.



individuals responsible for war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity during the Ten-Day War and the Croatian War of Independence (1991-1995), the brutal Bosnian War (1992-1995), and the Kosovo War (1998-1999) in Yugoslavia, as well as the Rwandan Genocide in 1994.

Another notable tribunal is the Commissions of Inquiry and Tribunals, which establishes commissions set up under government order.<sup>8</sup> Essentially, the Commissions of Inquiry and Tribunals are independent, formal bodies established by a nation's government to investigate matters of public concern, international policy violations, and administrative or civil disputes. Depending on the nation. The commission of inquiries gather relevant facts and other forms of evidential information, while the commissions serve as a preliminary court system before being brought to the ICC for further inspection and ruling. The establishment has not only made the process of war crime identification more efficient, but accessible to more forms of government. This has allowed for the opportunity of a wider variety of countries to engage in war crime accountability, and follow trials through to the end with the ICC.

Regarding fact-finding bodies, the UN has opened the ability for the Security Council, General Assembly, and Human Rights Council to launch fact-finding missions of investigations on international law violators. In partnership with Civil Society Groups, these fact-finding bodies

---

<sup>8</sup>*Commissions of Investigation*, [www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government-in-ireland/how-government-works/tribunals-and-investigations/commissions-of-investigation/](http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government-in-ireland/how-government-works/tribunals-and-investigations/commissions-of-investigation/). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.



gather evidence using technology. This technology often includes digital recording devices, satellite imagery for geographic analysis of conflict zones, digital evidence forensic software, and secure communications for platforms of information exchanges.<sup>9</sup> Accompanying this, the UN has also worked to establish new legal frameworks, as seen in the UN International Law Commission. This commission has played an essential role in developing new conventions, notably the draft articles for a Universal Treaty on Crimes Against Humanity. These drafts have outlined an aim for justice of war crime victims under civilian murder and prisoner torture, and deter future atrocities from occurring.<sup>10</sup>

The General Assembly has also continued debating and advancing the principles of The Responsibility to Protect (R2P). The R2P is a normative commitment by the states to continue upholding war crime prevention of mass atrocity, such as genocide, ethnic cleansing, and other crimes against humanity. The R2P consists of 3 pillars: The protection of a State's population in its primary responsibility, the role the international community undertakes in assisting states in

---

<sup>9</sup>“UN Accountability Mechanisms - the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.” *Home - The Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights*, [www.geneva-academy.ch/event/ghrp-annual-conference/detail/423-un-accountability-mechanisms#:~:text=Over%20the%20years%2C%20these%20accountability,a%20standing%20independent%20investigative%20mechanism](http://www.geneva-academy.ch/event/ghrp-annual-conference/detail/423-un-accountability-mechanisms#:~:text=Over%20the%20years%2C%20these%20accountability,a%20standing%20independent%20investigative%20mechanism). Accessed 4 Sept. 2025.

<sup>10</sup>“Definitions of Genocide and Related Crimes.” *United Nations*, United Nations, [www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention/definition#:~:text=War%20crimes%20are%20those%20violations,criminal%20responsibility%20under%20international%20law](http://www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention/definition#:~:text=War%20crimes%20are%20those%20violations,criminal%20responsibility%20under%20international%20law). Accessed 4 Sept. 2025.



this responsibility , and the international community’s responsibility to intervene and deter conflict violating state responsibilities outlined.<sup>11</sup>

### III. Topics to Consider

#### A. The Utilization of Artificial Intelligence in Evidence Analysis

With rapid technological improvements, the accuracy of artificial intelligence has increased drastically in the last decade. With the utilization of newly developed AI, there are greater opportunities to streamline investigation of corporate complicity in war crimes. Artificial intelligence assists Transitional Justice Mechanisms (a processes aimed at addressing past atrocities in society)<sup>12</sup> in the accountability of sexual violence and the role of victims agency in documentation. AI can also offer monitoring systems for International Human Law, determining if attacks are intended to terrorize civilians, and simplify criminal analysis in the context of victim justice.<sup>13</sup> However errors in the context of AI are nearly inevitable. It is important to be cautious when using AI, as their opaque decision-making process complicates International Human Law compliance, as machinery and technology can’t be held accountable for human

---

<sup>11</sup>“What Is R2P?” *Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect*, 27 Mar. 2025, [www.globalr2p.org/what-is-r2p/#:~:text=The%20Responsibility%20to%20Protect%20%E2%80%93%20known,clearing%20and%20crimes%20against%20humanity](http://www.globalr2p.org/what-is-r2p/#:~:text=The%20Responsibility%20to%20Protect%20%E2%80%93%20known,clearing%20and%20crimes%20against%20humanity).

<sup>12</sup> “IIIM – International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism.” *Un.org*, 2016, [iiim.un.org/](http://iiim.un.org/) Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.

<sup>13</sup> Krupiy, Written by Tetyana (Tanya), and Tetyana (Tanya) Krupiy. “What Role Artificial Intelligence Could Play in Evaluating the Compliance of Military Operations with International Humanitarian Law: The Case Study of the Conduct of Hostilities in Ukraine.” *EJIL*, 21 Feb. 2024, [www.ejiltalk.org/what-role-artificial-intelligence-could-play-in-evaluating-the-compliance-of-military-operations-with-international-humanitarian-law-the-case-study-of-the-conduct-of-hostilities-in-ukraine/#:~:text=Artificial%20intelligence%20\(AI\)%20can%20be%20used%20as,the%20attack%20if%20civilians%20enter%20the%20area](http://www.ejiltalk.org/what-role-artificial-intelligence-could-play-in-evaluating-the-compliance-of-military-operations-with-international-humanitarian-law-the-case-study-of-the-conduct-of-hostilities-in-ukraine/#:~:text=Artificial%20intelligence%20(AI)%20can%20be%20used%20as,the%20attack%20if%20civilians%20enter%20the%20area).



rights violations, making it harder to identify a single violator to be held accountable. These algorithms contain AI systems with complex internal processes, limiting the ability for users, developers, and other third party involved participants to understand/access the precise reasoning or steps taken to reach a certain output.<sup>14</sup> Thus making it easier for AI to facilitate unlawful actions including repression and ethnic cleansing.

### B. Key Legal Principles and Doctrines

The accountability of war crimes entail a variety of key legal frameworks that may be further developed or modeled off of in potential solutions. Set out in Article 48 of Additional Protocol I (AP I) in the Geneva Conventions, The Principle of Distinction requires conflicting parties to differentiate between noncombatants and combatants. The Article also prohibits “the deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian objects”,<sup>15</sup> under AP I Articles 51 and 52<sup>16</sup> and Common Article 3<sup>17</sup> of the 1949 Geneva Conventions. The Geneva Conventions also classify such targeting as “a war crime under Articles 8(2)(b)(i)-(ii) of the Rome Statute, respectively.” Beyond the Additional Protocol I of Article 48, the Nuremberg Principles also play a

---

<sup>14</sup> Patel, Faiza. “Peering into the ‘double Black Box’ of National Security and Ai.” *Default*, Lawfare, 18 July 2025, [www.lawfaremedia.org/article/peering-into-the--double-black-box--of-national-security-and-ai#:~:text=The%20book%20amply%20demonstrates%20Deeks's,box%20impedes%20accountability%20in%20practice](http://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/peering-into-the--double-black-box--of-national-security-and-ai#:~:text=The%20book%20amply%20demonstrates%20Deeks's,box%20impedes%20accountability%20in%20practice).

<sup>15</sup> Khachatryan, Davit. “If the ‘Why’ of War Shapes the ‘How’ of Law, Who Is Accountable?” *Lieber Institute West Point*, 22 Jan. 2025, [lieber.westpoint.edu/if-why-war-shapes-how-law-who-is-accountable/#:~:text=The%20principle%20of%20distinction%2C%20set,iv\)%20of%20the%20Rome%20Statute](http://lieber.westpoint.edu/if-why-war-shapes-how-law-who-is-accountable/#:~:text=The%20principle%20of%20distinction%2C%20set,iv)%20of%20the%20Rome%20Statute).

<sup>16</sup> *IHL*, [ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-1977/article-51?activeTab=default](http://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-1977/article-51?activeTab=default). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

<sup>17</sup> *IHL*, [ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciii-1949/article-3?activeTab=1949GCs-APs-and-commentaries](http://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciii-1949/article-3?activeTab=1949GCs-APs-and-commentaries). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.



foundational role in key legal principles and doctrines of war crime accountability. These principles establish 10 legal guidelines that help define the classifications of crime under international law in regards to war crimes. The principals were initially systemized to provide a baseline for the Nuremberg Trials of Nazi leaders after World War II. Essentially, the laws established that individuals are to be held accountable for their violations of international humanitarian law, regardless of authoritative command or governmental orders.<sup>18</sup>

### C. Autonomous Weapon Systems (AWS)

War crimes committed by AWS pose a significant challenge in the accountability of war crimes. AWS are independently controlled military technologies used to identify, select, and engage targets without human intervention. Unlike remote-controlled drones, AWS utilizes predetermined algorithms and sensors to make lethal decisions in conflict zones or battlefields.<sup>19</sup> Once targets are identified, activated systems gain the ability to independently release an onboard weapon, engaging and destroying the target at hand. The international concern over AWS has grown under fear of lacking human judgement, biased programming, and the ethical conflict regarding machinery taking human lives. Furthermore, AWS presents the international community with the possibility of accountability gaps, situations in war crime accountability where no single individual can be held accountable or put on trial since direct human

---

<sup>18</sup> “Nuremberg Principles.” *Nuremberg Academy*, [www.nurembergacademy.org/about-us/nuremberg-principles](http://www.nurembergacademy.org/about-us/nuremberg-principles). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

<sup>19</sup> “What You Need to Know about Autonomous Weapons.” *International Committee of the Red Cross*, 18 Oct. 2023,



control/intent has been separated from the machinery carrying out the potentially unethical action.<sup>20</sup> Due to the fact the Rome Statute limits its foundational laws in the prosecution of “natural persons”, corporations and machinery fall between a technical gap that allows them to avoid trial or conviction.<sup>21</sup> The fault of the prosecutor becomes a matter of those who developed the machinery across a complex socio-technical system, the governmental distributor, or others affiliated with the machinery. This not only limits the power and stability the Rome Statute has over international humanitarian law, but increases the likelihood of false prosecution, or complicated, ineffective trials as to who should be convicted/incarcerated.

#### **IV. Case Study: Ongwen Case**

Dominic Ongwen was a Brigade Commander of the Sinia Brigade of the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) when his warrant was released on July 8, 2005. Roughly 27 years old, Ongwen was charged with 61 counts of crimes against humanity and war crimes allegedly committed in northern Uganda.<sup>22</sup> When Ongwen was a child, the LRA abducted and stripped him from his family, forcing him to work under their command. Despite his technical involuntary decision to work for the Army, Ongwen was still held fully responsible for his crimes committed

---

<sup>20</sup>Docherty, Bonnie. “Mind the Gap.” *Human Rights Watch*, 28 Mar. 2023, [www.hrw.org/report/2015/04/09/mind-gap/lack-accountability-killer-robots#:~:text=Human%20commanders%20or%20operators%20could,robot's%20commission%20of%20wrongful%20acts.%5B](http://www.hrw.org/report/2015/04/09/mind-gap/lack-accountability-killer-robots#:~:text=Human%20commanders%20or%20operators%20could,robot's%20commission%20of%20wrongful%20acts.%5B)

<sup>21</sup>Crootof, Rebecca. “Ai and the Actual IHL Accountability Gap.” *Centre for International Governance Innovation*, 28 Nov. 2022,

<sup>22</sup>“Ongwen | *International Criminal Court*, [www.icc-cpi.int/uganda/ongwen](http://www.icc-cpi.int/uganda/ongwen). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.



in northern Uganda.<sup>23</sup> The 61 counts Ongwen was convicted for fall into three broad categories: Crimes Against Civilians (1), Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBD) (2), and Use of Child Soldiers (3). Under the first category, Ongwen was charged with attacking four Internationally Displaced Persons camps in Northern Uganda. The attacks included murder, attempted murder, torture, enslavement, pillaging, and the destruction of property. In the second category, SGBD charges covered crimes that were either committed by Ongwen himself, or members of the brigade under his control. This included rape, sexual slavery, forced marriage, forced pregnancy, and torture. Under the final category, Ongwin was found guilty of “conscripting and using children under the age of 15 to actively participate in hostilities within the Sinia brigade”.<sup>24</sup> These crimes against humanity were seen as some of the most ruthless actions under an LRA commander by the ICC. Prior to Ongwen, the ICC was also yet to come across a defendant that had committed a standalone crime of forced pregnancy as a war crime and crime against humanity. As described by the Human Rights Watch, “Ongwen’s conviction is an important milestone in a long quest for international recognition, justice and reparations for survivors of

---

<sup>23</sup>*Dominic Ongwen Declared Guilty of War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity Committed in Uganda | International Criminal Court*, [www.icc-cpi.int/news/dominic-ongwen-declared-guilty-war-crimes-and-crimes-against-humanity-committed-uganda](http://www.icc-cpi.int/news/dominic-ongwen-declared-guilty-war-crimes-and-crimes-against-humanity-committed-uganda). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

<sup>24</sup>ILJ, Harvard. “Zero-Sum Failure: The Intersection of Sexual Violence & Child-Soldier Culpability in Ongwen.” *Harvard International Law Journal*, 18 Apr. 2025, [journals.law.harvard.edu/ilj/2025/04/zero-sum-failure-the-intersection-of-sexual-violence-child-soldier-culpability-in-ongwen/#:~:text=SGBV%20charges%2C%20as%20previously%20noted,were%20charged%20as%20separate%20crimes](https://journals.law.harvard.edu/ilj/2025/04/zero-sum-failure-the-intersection-of-sexual-violence-child-soldier-culpability-in-ongwen/#:~:text=SGBV%20charges%2C%20as%20previously%20noted,were%20charged%20as%20separate%20crimes).



sexual and gender crimes during war”.<sup>25</sup> The ICC’s experience and conviction of Ongwen, specifically, charges related to forced pregnancy, creates a greater international regard for legal philosophy regarding the prevention of reproductive violence in international war crimes, and the international community as a whole. The Ongwen case has helped to explain and enlighten the public of how gender based crimes are not limited to sexual violence, but may expand to torture and mutilation in the context of gender bias. In recent developments, the ICC has strived to incorporate more developed and gender sensitive practices within their investigative research regarding violations of international human rights. Additionally, the court has vowed to incorporate more strategies within their legal system to address stigmas in crime reportings. These strategies include, but are not limited to, outreach, victim support, and jurisdependence (consequences regarding favorable laws) development.<sup>26</sup> Since the Ongwen case, the ICC has also stated its plans to provide welfare and security for survivors, witnesses, and potential victims that proceed testimonies regarding international war crimes.

---

<sup>25</sup> “LRA’s Ongwen: A Critical First ICC Conviction.” *Human Rights Watch*, 15 Mar. 2021, [www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/13/lras-ongwen-critical-first-icc-conviction](http://www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/13/lras-ongwen-critical-first-icc-conviction).

<sup>26</sup> *Policy Paper on Sexual and Gender-Based Crimes*, [www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/iccdocs/otp/Policy\\_Paper\\_on\\_Sexual\\_and\\_Gender-Based\\_Crimes-20\\_June\\_2014-ENG.pdf](http://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/iccdocs/otp/Policy_Paper_on_Sexual_and_Gender-Based_Crimes-20_June_2014-ENG.pdf). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.



## V. Guiding Questions

1. War crime accountability is not only a broad topic, but a pressing one at that. With this, there are a variety of niche research areas regarding geographical, historical, and social violations of international human rights laws. How has your country been affected by these socioeconomic categories in the context of war crime accountability?
2. Regarding the ICC, what has your country done in recent developments that either align with or further the foundational laws outlined by the ICC?
3. International policies vary geographically, socially, politically, and economically. How can collaboration and diplomatic discussion assist the development of accountability at the individual and national level?
4. Human rights violations are frequently dismissed or unheeded in the context of gender biases. What can your country do to destigmatize gender-based violence in violations of international human law, and assist other countries in their strive to do so as well?
5. In regards to “Black-box Algorithms”, how should the international community approach potentially unethical practices of artificial intelligence, and further, how can transparency and peace prevail whilst maintaining peace and abiding by privacy policies in place by other nations?
6. How can individual corporations or governmental organizations maintain helpful technological tools in conflict zones, while also closing the accountability gap?



7. State Parties have the ability to propose amendments to the Rome Statute after Seven years of its integration into that State.<sup>27</sup> Although a Formal Review Conference is held every seven years to discuss potential amendments, what are some ways the international community can more efficiently develop an international legal framework in the accountability of war crime?

---

<sup>27</sup> *H.R.2092 - 102nd Congress (1991-1992): Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991 | Congress.Gov | Library of Congress*, [www.congress.gov/bill/102nd-congress/house-bill/2092](http://www.congress.gov/bill/102nd-congress/house-bill/2092). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.



## Works Cited

*About the Court*, [www.icc-cpi.int/about/the-court](http://www.icc-cpi.int/about/the-court). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

“About Us.” *Civil Rights Defenders*, 25 Mar. 2025, [crd.org/about-us/](http://crd.org/about-us/).

“Accountability for International Crimes.” *ASIL Task Force on Policy Options for U.S.*

*Engagement with the ICC*,

[www.asil-us-icc-task-force.org/report/06-us-interests-impacted-by-the-icc/accountability-for-international-crimes/#:~:text=Among%20other%20initiatives%2C%20the%20United,Act%20and%20Executive%20Order%2013818](http://www.asil-us-icc-task-force.org/report/06-us-interests-impacted-by-the-icc/accountability-for-international-crimes/#:~:text=Among%20other%20initiatives%2C%20the%20United,Act%20and%20Executive%20Order%2013818). Accessed 4 Sept. 2025.

*AFSC*, [afsc.org/sites/default/files/documents/Burundi-TRC-report-EN.pdf](http://afsc.org/sites/default/files/documents/Burundi-TRC-report-EN.pdf). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

*Commissions of Investigation*,

[www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government-in-ireland/how-government-works/tribunals-and-investigations/commissions-of-investigation/](http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government-in-ireland/how-government-works/tribunals-and-investigations/commissions-of-investigation/). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

Crootof, Rebecca. “Ai and the Actual IHL Accountability Gap.” *Centre for International*

*Governance Innovation*, 28 Nov. 2022,

[www.cigionline.org/articles/ai-and-the-actual-ihl-accountability-gap/#:~:text=rticle%20after](http://www.cigionline.org/articles/ai-and-the-actual-ihl-accountability-gap/#:~:text=rticle%20after)



%20article%20bemoans%20how,civilian%20harm%20%E2%80%94%20may%20be%20la  
wful.

“Definitions of Genocide and Related Crimes.” *United Nations*, United Nations,

[www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention/definition#:~:text=War%20crimes%20are%20those%20violations,criminal%20responsibility%20under%20international%20law](http://www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention/definition#:~:text=War%20crimes%20are%20those%20violations,criminal%20responsibility%20under%20international%20law). Accessed 4 Sept. 2025.

Docherty, Bonnie. “Mind the Gap.” *Human Rights Watch*, 28 Mar. 2023,

[www.hrw.org/report/2015/04/09/mind-gap/lack-accountability-killer-robots#:~:text=Human%20commanders%20or%20operators%20could,robot’s%20commission%20of%20wrongful%20acts.%5B](http://www.hrw.org/report/2015/04/09/mind-gap/lack-accountability-killer-robots#:~:text=Human%20commanders%20or%20operators%20could,robot’s%20commission%20of%20wrongful%20acts.%5B).

*Dominic Ongwen Declared Guilty of War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity Committed in Uganda* | *International Criminal Court*,

[www.icc-cpi.int/news/dominic-ongwen-declared-guilty-war-crimes-and-crimes-against-humanity-committed-uganda](http://www.icc-cpi.int/news/dominic-ongwen-declared-guilty-war-crimes-and-crimes-against-humanity-committed-uganda). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

*Govinfo*, [www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-116publ260/html/PLAW-116publ260.htm](http://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-116publ260/html/PLAW-116publ260.htm).

Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.



*H.R.2092 - 102nd Congress (1991-1992): Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991* | *Congress.Gov* |  
*Library of Congress*, [www.congress.gov/bill/102nd-congress/house-bill/2092](http://www.congress.gov/bill/102nd-congress/house-bill/2092). Accessed 5  
Sept. 2025.

*How the Court Works*, [www.icc-cpi.int/about/how-the-court-works](http://www.icc-cpi.int/about/how-the-court-works). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

*ICC - Agreement between the International Criminal Court and the United Nations* |  
*International Criminal Court*,  
[www.icc-cpi.int/news/icc-agreement-between-international-criminal-court-and-united-natio  
ns](http://www.icc-cpi.int/news/icc-agreement-between-international-criminal-court-and-united-nations). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

*IHL*, [ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-1977/article-51?activeTab=default](http://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-1977/article-51?activeTab=default). Accessed 5  
Sept. 2025.

*IHL*, [ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciii-1949/article-3?activeTab=1949GCs-APs-and-com  
mentaries](http://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciii-1949/article-3?activeTab=1949GCs-APs-and-commentaries). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

ILJ, Harvard. “Zero-Sum Failure: The Intersection of Sexual Violence & Child-Soldier  
Culpability in Ongwen.” *Harvard International Law Journal*, 18 Apr. 2025,  
[journals.law.harvard.edu/ilj/2025/04/zero-sum-failure-the-intersection-of-sexual-violence-ch  
ild-soldier-culpability-in-ongwen/#:~:text=SGBV%20charges%2C%20as%20previously%2  
0noted,were%20charged%20as%20separate%20crimes](http://journals.law.harvard.edu/ilj/2025/04/zero-sum-failure-the-intersection-of-sexual-violence-child-soldier-culpability-in-ongwen/#:~:text=SGBV%20charges%2C%20as%20previously%20noted,were%20charged%20as%20separate%20crimes).



Khachatryan, Davit. “If the ‘Why’ of War Shapes the ‘How’ of Law, Who Is Accountable?”

*Lieber Institute West Point*, 22 Jan. 2025,

[lieber.westpoint.edu/if-why-war-shapes-how-law-who-is-accountable/#:~:text=The%20principle%20of%20distinction%2C%20set,iv\)%20of%20the%20Rome%20Statute.](https://lieber.westpoint.edu/if-why-war-shapes-how-law-who-is-accountable/#:~:text=The%20principle%20of%20distinction%2C%20set,iv)%20of%20the%20Rome%20Statute.)

Krupiy, Written by Tetyana (Tanya), and Tetyana (Tanya) Krupiy. “What Role Artificial

Intelligence Could Play in Evaluating the Compliance of Military Operations with International Humanitarian Law: The Case Study of the Conduct of Hostilities in Ukraine.”

*EJIL*, 21 Feb. 2024,

[www.ejiltalk.org/what-role-artificial-intelligence-could-play-in-evaluating-the-compliance-of-military-operations-with-international-humanitarian-law-the-case-study-of-the-conduct-of-hostilities-in-ukraine/#:~:text=Artificial%20intelligence%20\(AI\)%20can%20be%20used%20as,the%20attack%20if%20civilians%20enter%20the%20area.](https://www.ejiltalk.org/what-role-artificial-intelligence-could-play-in-evaluating-the-compliance-of-military-operations-with-international-humanitarian-law-the-case-study-of-the-conduct-of-hostilities-in-ukraine/#:~:text=Artificial%20intelligence%20(AI)%20can%20be%20used%20as,the%20attack%20if%20civilians%20enter%20the%20area.)

“LRA’s Ongwen: A Critical First ICC Conviction.” *Human Rights Watch*, 15 Mar. 2021,

[www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/13/lras-ongwen-critical-first-icc-conviction.](https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/13/lras-ongwen-critical-first-icc-conviction.)

“Nuremberg Principles.” *Nuremberg Academy*,

[www.nurembergacademy.org/about-us/nuremberg-principles.](https://www.nurembergacademy.org/about-us/nuremberg-principles.) Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

*Ongwen* | *International Criminal Court*, [www.icc-cpi.int/uganda/ongwen](https://www.icc-cpi.int/uganda/ongwen). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.



Patel, Faiza. “Peering into the ‘double Black Box’ of National Security and Ai.” *Default*,

Lawfare, 18 July 2025,

[www.lawfaremedia.org/article/peering-into-the--double-black-box--of-national-security-and-ai#:~:text=The%20book%20amply%20demonstrates%20Deeks’s,box%20impedes%20accountability%20in%20practice.](http://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/peering-into-the--double-black-box--of-national-security-and-ai#:~:text=The%20book%20amply%20demonstrates%20Deeks’s,box%20impedes%20accountability%20in%20practice.)

*Policy Paper on Sexual and Gender-Based Crimes*,

[www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/iccdocs/otp/Policy\\_Paper\\_on\\_Sexual\\_and\\_Gender-Based\\_Crimes-20\\_June\\_2014-ENG.pdf](http://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/iccdocs/otp/Policy_Paper_on_Sexual_and_Gender-Based_Crimes-20_June_2014-ENG.pdf). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.

“UN Accountability Mechanisms - the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.” *Home - The Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights*,

[www.geneva-academy.ch/event/ghrp-annual-conference/detail/423-un-accountability-mechanisms#:~:text=Over%20the%20years%2C%20these%20accountability,a%20standing%20independent%20investigative%20mechanism.](http://www.geneva-academy.ch/event/ghrp-annual-conference/detail/423-un-accountability-mechanisms#:~:text=Over%20the%20years%2C%20these%20accountability,a%20standing%20independent%20investigative%20mechanism.) Accessed 4 Sept. 2025.

*Understanding-the-Icc.Pdf*,

[www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/understanding-the-icc.pdf](http://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/understanding-the-icc.pdf). Accessed 5 Sept. 2025.



“What Is R2P?” *Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect*, 27 Mar. 2025,

[www.globalr2p.org/what-is-r2p/#:~:text=The%20Responsibility%20to%20Protect%20%E2%80%93%20known,cleansing%20and%20crimes%20against%20humanity.](http://www.globalr2p.org/what-is-r2p/#:~:text=The%20Responsibility%20to%20Protect%20%E2%80%93%20known,cleansing%20and%20crimes%20against%20humanity.)

“What You Need to Know about Autonomous Weapons.” *International Committee of the Red Cross*, 18 Oct. 2023,

[www.icrc.org/en/document/what-you-need-know-about-autonomous-weapons.](http://www.icrc.org/en/document/what-you-need-know-about-autonomous-weapons)



## Topic B: Building Long-Term Peace and Stability in Syria

### I. Background

Syria has been in a state of crisis for the last 14 years. Economic and political hardship has led to widespread poverty, malnutrition, trafficking of women and children, and displacement. Between 90% of the population living below the poverty line, and over 70% living in poverty in host countries, it was estimated that 16.7 million Syrians required humanitarian aid.

<sup>28</sup>Beginning in 2011, the seeds of revolution against the government under President Bashar al-Assad were sown when peaceful protesters began to demonstrate for political reform. Syrian citizens were unhappy with the widespread unemployment, and even more unhappy with the corruption in their government and their lack of political freedoms. While the protests were peaceful, they were met with an extremely violent reaction by the Syrian police force carried out by their inadequately trained officers. Already dealing with the economic and social hardship due to the Arab Spring that erupted in the Middle East, the civil war caused by the police backlash amplified the already great complications.

Since the initial conflict began, there have been many groups that have been involved in the conflicts, creating many different sub-conflicts. Fighting broke out across Aleppo, Damascus, and many northeastern parts of Syria. Some of these groups include the Free Syrian Army, the

---

<sup>28</sup> UNHCR. "Syria Refugee Crisis Explained." *Unrefugees.org*, The UN Refugee Agency, 13 Mar. 2025, [www.unrefugees.org/news/syria-refugee-crisis-explained/](http://www.unrefugees.org/news/syria-refugee-crisis-explained/).



Kurdish Rebel Fighters, the Islamic State, Jabhat Fath al-Sham, Hezbollah, and the Syrian Democratic Forces. While many of these groups support the civilian cause, for many, there are underlying motives and greater purposes that they gain from serving the Syrian population, more than just reforming the government. Outside of the smaller groups, there has also been involvement with other nations that has changed the conflict. For example, the Syrian government received support from both Russia and Iran, and the Syrian uprising's citizens received support from Turkey, the United States, and other Western powers, and many of the Gulf states.

Over the past 14 years, an estimated 202,000 have been killed, 23,000 being children and 1,200 being women under the regime led by Bashar Assad, with an additional 96,000 disappearances also at the hands of the regime.<sup>29</sup> Along with this, there has been around 15,000 individuals who died to torture, some of these methods being Barrel bombs, Chemical weapons, Cluster munitions, and incendiary weapons. The disastrous circumstances for civilians alone has brought international attention to this incident, and in response many humanitarian groups have been formed in support of the civilians affected by proxy. These humanitarian groups, like The Syrian Network for Human Rights, The Syrian Archive, and The Violations Documentation Center have been dedicated to supplying resources, rebuilding infrastructure, and relocating Syria's population. Due to the relocation of more than 14 million Syrians, neighboring countries

---

<sup>29</sup> Guardian staff reporter. "Syrian President Blames Poorly Trained Police for Bloody Crackdown." *The Guardian*, The Guardian, 18 May 2011, [www.theguardian.com/world/2011/may/18/syrian-president-police-crackdown](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/may/18/syrian-president-police-crackdown). Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.



such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan have been flooded with the Syrian population, who most likely have to live in worse economic conditions than they were prior to their flee. Moreover, an estimated 1.2 million people were displaced after the devastation from an earthquake in 2023. This conflict is spreading all across the Middle East with innocent civilians, mostly women and children, having to face the consequences.

After being subject to the rule of the Assad regime for 13 years, the Assad government was finally toppled in December of 2024, following an offensive in Idlib carried out by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham. On December 8th, Bashar al-Assad was forcibly removed from office and then fled to Russia.<sup>30</sup> The new government, under President Ahmed al-Sharaa, is classified as a transitional government consisting of 23 ministers and a diverse cabinet. The goal of the new government was to rebuild Syria until the new elections take place; however, no date has been set for this election, and al-Sharaa himself has said that the election could be as late as five years.

<sup>31</sup> Considering this government is just considered transitional, it holds little power to enforce laws, and virtually can't create any new ones. Without a stable government in Syria and various rebel and militant groups seizing regional control, the Syrian population is left in more disarray than before. Syria's military, police forces, and almost all forms of human services have lost

---

<sup>30</sup> Tokmajyan, Armenak. "Bashar Al-Assad of Syria Has Been Ousted from Power." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 9 Dec. 2024, [carnegieendowment.org/middle-east/diwan/2024/12/bashar-al-assad-of-syria-has-been-ousted-from-power?lang=en](https://carnegieendowment.org/middle-east/diwan/2024/12/bashar-al-assad-of-syria-has-been-ousted-from-power?lang=en).

<sup>31</sup> Jazeera, Al. "Syrian President Al-Sharaa Unveils Transitional Government." *Al Jazeera*, 30 Mar. 2025, [www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/30/syrian-president-unveils-transitional-government](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/30/syrian-president-unveils-transitional-government).



almost all control. Since December 8th, 2024, almost 10,000 people have been killed, many of whom were tortured or executed.

Recently, the Israel and Palestine conflict has had an increasing effect on Syria, most notably with the Druze population. The Druze, while mostly originating from Syria, are a part of Israel after the 1967 Six-Day War. Many Druze serve in the Israel Defense Force (IDF), and since October 7th 2023, many have been injured or killed in the conflict. Due to Syria's historically poor relations with Israel, many Druze have found themselves the targets of attacks from various Syrian forces. In July, over 1,100 Druze were killed by Syrian forces through executions, looting, arson, and much more.<sup>32</sup> In retaliation, Israel launched a series of airstrikes on Syria in Damascus and Sweida, and also provided aid to the Druze community. A ceasefire took effect between Israel and Syria on July 19th, following multiple airstrikes targeting military sites in Damascus, and in light of displacement in Sweida that has come as a result of the airstrikes. In Sweida, more than 190,000 people have been displaced, and haven't been able to reach the capital, Damascus, due to the main highway being inaccessible since July 12th.

## **II. UN Involvement**

Since the beginning of the Syrian conflict, the United Nations has been involved in a multitude of different aspects of the dispute. One of the earliest and most notable cases of the UN's involvement in this conflict was through the 2013-2014 prohibition of chemical weapons,

---

<sup>32</sup> "Who Are the Druze, and Why Is Israel Defending Them in Syria?" *AJC*, 24 July 2025, [www.ajc.org/news/who-are-the-druze-and-why-is-israel-defending-them-in-syria](http://www.ajc.org/news/who-are-the-druze-and-why-is-israel-defending-them-in-syria).



which was a joint mission between OPCW and the Security Council, Resolution 2118. This resolution was passed to eliminate the engineering of chemical weapons under the Syrian Arab Republic, due to the increasing safety and security risks surrounding the manufacturing of the weapons. Concerns were brought up following the Syrian Republic's breach of the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, and declared that, "The Syrian Republic would not be permitted to use, develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile or retain chemical weapons, or transfer, directly or indirectly, chemical weapons to other States or non-State actors."<sup>33</sup>

Another pertinent resolution was Resolution 2165, adopted in 2014, which dealt with humanitarian aid through directing relief delivery and assisting border crossings across conflict lines. Widespread media involvement demanded United Nations involvement in Syrian aid access, and through this unanimous resolution, secured direct routes for supplies for 6.4 million internally displaced persons, 4.5 million people living in hard-to-reach areas, and also to over 240,000 that were trapped in besieged areas.<sup>34</sup>

While Humanitarian aid is one of the United Nations' biggest focuses in this conflict, accountability for war crimes has also been a main focus. This goal is exemplified through Resolution A/71/248, adopted on 21st of December, 2016. This resolution was geared towards

---

<sup>33</sup> *Resolution 2118 (2013)*. 2013

<sup>34</sup> "With Millions of Syrians in Need, Security Council Adopts Resolution 2165 (2014) Directing Relief Delivery through More Border Crossings, across Conflict Lines | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." *Un.org*, 14 July 2014, [press.un.org/en/2014/sc11473.doc.htm](http://press.un.org/en/2014/sc11473.doc.htm)? Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.



establishing the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism, otherwise known as the IIIM, to assist in the ongoing investigation and future prosecution of those in the Syrian Arab Republic who have broken serious international laws.<sup>35</sup> The IIIM has been assisting Syrian judicial systems and is determined to bring justice to the many innocent Syrian lives destroyed by the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011. Another goal of the United Nations is to have negotiations for long-term peace settlements through ceasefires, as the need for a permanent peaceful solution after the hundreds of temporary broken ceasefires is vital to end the conflict and maintain safety and security. In order to facilitate talks regarding a ceasefire, the Security Council passed Resolution 2254 in 2015, which endorsed a road map and set a timetable for peace talks.

While the United Nations has seen success in solving this issue, there has been a lot of backlash saying that in modern times, specifically 2024 and beyond, they aren't doing enough and have become irrelevant in the conflict. Many believe that while the United Nations has attempted to bring Syria to a state of peace, its fear of interrupting international peace has deemed them mostly irrelevant in any substantial chance. Now in 2025, with the Assad regime being removed from the state and with multiple rebel groups seizing control of Syria's different regions, forming a ceasefire with one unified front has been almost deemed impossible. The Security Council has failed to adopt more resolutions than those that have been adopted

---

<sup>35</sup>“IIIM – International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism.” *Un.org*, 2016, [iiim.un.org](http://iiim.un.org). Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.



successfully, considering that 25 resolutions were adopted, while 29 were vetoed. Also, due to the lack of power held in the new interim government to renew old resolutions, many previously successful resolutions, like the 2014 Resolution 2118 that eliminated the engineering of chemical weapons under the Syrian Arab Republic, have lost any enforcement they once held. Now, the UN is mostly focused on large scale aid missions, and delivering monthly assistance to displaced populations. While the UN still continues to push towards a diplomatic end to the conflict, it has proven far more influential in providing aid to the Syrian populations.

### **III. Topics to Consider**

#### **A. Humanitarian Crisis with Children**

Civilians in the regions of Idlib, North Aleppo, and other Northeast Regions are living in some of the worst conditions across the whole Syrian nation. These circumstances necessitate a quick and safe solution because the population living in these regions is running out of time. More than 7 million children are living in these regions in dire circumstances and require the help of outside sources for their survival. Due to a massive influx of people into the Idlib region, the population living there has not been able to sustain itself. Over 60% of the population living in these regions are considered IDPs, or internally displaced persons, and are mostly living in a state of poverty and malnutrition. Moreover, 63% of the Idlib population is children, aged 0-17, have fallen victim to both human trafficking and child labour.<sup>36</sup> Children are being trafficked in

---

<sup>36</sup>“4.12.3. Child Labour and Child Trafficking.” *European Union Agency for Asylum*, 2024,

[euaa.europa.eu/country-guidance-syria/4123-child-labour-and-child-trafficking](https://euaa.europa.eu/country-guidance-syria/4123-child-labour-and-child-trafficking).



neighboring countries, like Iraq in the towns of Deir Ez-Zor and Al Qaim. Children have been subject to abuse, exploitation, and no escape. Schools have also been heavily affected throughout the war, whether it's from a missile or repurposing, more than 7,000 schools have been destroyed or damaged, leaving 2.4 million children out of educational facilities.

#### B. Permanent Ceasefire Legislation

Between the over 140 failed cease-fire attempts, 12 of them being considered “major”, and the lack of legislation to legally protect those affected by the Syrian conflict, the need for permanent peaceful ceasefire legislation to be passed has never been more important than it is now. Since the fall of the Assad government in 2024, forming a stable ceasefire has become increasingly out of reach. Even with an interim government under Ahmad al-Sharaa taking over the old government, smaller rebel groups still maintain their power over various Syrian regions. There is overwhelming public support for a diplomatic resolution, and to dissolve militia control in Syria by the Syrian population. In February of 2025, with around 900 participants, Damascus held the “National Dialogue Conference” that called for unity and government reform in Syria, in order to promote peaceful diplomatic solutions.<sup>37</sup> However, it is largely believed that with the correct incentives for both the Syrian government and the various rebel groups, a ceasefire can be reached peacefully and safely. Finding a compromise in legislation for a ceasefire will be a critical solution to putting a permanent end to this conflict, instead of a temporary one.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Syria, in. “The National Dialogue in Syria: A Step Forward or a Concerning Trajectory?” *Middle East Institute*, 2025, [www.mei.edu/publications/national-dialogue-syria-step-forward-or-concerning-trajectory](http://www.mei.edu/publications/national-dialogue-syria-step-forward-or-concerning-trajectory).

<sup>38</sup> “Accountability in Syria - the Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights.” *The Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights*, 28 Mar. 2023, [www.ceasefire.org/accountability-in-syria/](http://www.ceasefire.org/accountability-in-syria/). Accessed 15 Sept. 2025.



### C. Securing Rights for Refugees

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has stated multiple times that “All refugees have the fundamental right to return to their country of origin at a time of their choosing, and all returns must be voluntary, dignified and safe,” and stands to support Syrian refugees whether inside their home country or host country.<sup>39</sup> Syrian Refugees have sought asylum in more than 130 countries, with the highest concentration of refugees living in Turkey, with 2.8 million refugees. While the UNHCR does work to support refugees in their host countries, their main goal is to bring refugees back to Syria safely. For many Syrians, returning to their country means living in poverty, with limited access to education and job opportunities. While 80% of refugees stated that they hoped to return back to Syria, as conducted in a regional survey by the ReliefWeb Submit, many believed that this return would unfortunately not be viable.<sup>40</sup> Many refugees, upon returning to Syria, are forced to identify as an Internally Displaced Person, so creating and enforcing legislation to protect refugees upon their return is crucial in restoring the Syrian population.

### IV. Case Study: Child Recruitment of the Revolutionary Youth in Northeastern Syria

---

<sup>39</sup> UNHCR. “Syria Refugee Crisis Explained.” *Unrefugees.org*, The UN Refugee Agency, 13 Mar. 2025, [www.unrefugees.org/news/syria-refugee-crisis-explained/](http://www.unrefugees.org/news/syria-refugee-crisis-explained/).

<sup>40</sup>OCHA. “ReliefWeb - Informing Humanitarians Worldwide.” *ReliefWeb*, 2019, [reliefweb.int/](http://reliefweb.int/).

“Mandate and Timelines.” *OPCW*, 3 Mar. 2017, [opcw.unmissions.org/mandate-and-timelines/?](http://opcw.unmissions.org/mandate-and-timelines/?) Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.



Occurring between 2022 and 2023, a socialist movement aimed towards organizing Syrian youth on the basis of creating a “democratic society”<sup>41</sup> was found to have been recruiting minors, often through coercion, to join in the Syrian Democratic Forces-affiliated military and security groups. This pattern started to be noticed by the parents and family members of children and teens, who reported their children to have gone missing, and many to be found in areas under the control of the SDF. According to the UN Secretary General’s Annual Report from 2025, Syria was ranked 5th out of 26 conflicts for recruitment and the use of children.<sup>42</sup>

There were over 23 cases of child recruitment, 15 being girls and 8 being boys, with at least 10 of which were under the age of 15. This all came to light when a 15-year-old girl joined the Revolutionary Youth’s vocational training course. Soon after completing the course, she was offered a job that she turned down, and the very next day disappeared. Later, the family of the young girl was allegedly sent a video of the 15-year-old refusing to return home, all while wearing a military uniform. When the Syrian Justice and Accountability Centre was sent to investigate this case, Revolutionary Youth denied all involvement and knowledge of the situation. Revolutionary Youth did eventually admit to having enlisted children after completion of the military training courses, but only after concrete evidence was built against them by the Syrian Justice and Accountability Centre and families of the children.

---

<sup>41</sup>“Northeast Syria: Military Recruitment of Children Persists.” *Human Rights Watch*, 2 Oct. 2024, [www.hrw.org/news/2024/10/02/northeast-syria-military-recruitment-children-persists](http://www.hrw.org/news/2024/10/02/northeast-syria-military-recruitment-children-persists).

<sup>42</sup>UNICEF. “The Situation of Children in Syria.” *W*[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), 2023, [www.unicef.org/syria/situation-children-syria](http://www.unicef.org/syria/situation-children-syria).



The trend of denying allegations against the recruitment of children by Revolutionary Youth was, unlike the name suggests, not “Revolutionary”. In fact, Revolutionary Youth is infamously known to silence the families of the children they’ve recruited through blackmail, threats, physical violence, and many empty promises. Some examples of the most extreme physical violence committed by Revolutionary Youth have been instances of kidnapping other family members, torture, and even murder. Many parents have sought out help for fear that they or the rest of their family will be put in danger if they speak out, yet the police forces in Northeastern Syria have been known to be mostly useless, and multiple times have covered up human rights violations for the Revolutionary Youth.

The Syrian Justice and Accountability Centre and the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria have been working to establish legal frameworks, but have had trouble in doing so due to the absence of the Syrian government. While the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria has assumed oversight for the upholding of many individual rights and humanitarian laws, without a stable Syrian government or court to enforce any legislation set in place, there is little hope of permanent change for the safety of Syria’s children. However, both the Syrian Justice and Accountability Centre and the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria believe that, with working within already established and applicable legal frameworks, there can be an established protocol to fight against the child recruitment crisis.



## V. Guiding Questions

1. Without a stable government in Syria, it has proven near impossible to pass any new legislation. Within your nation's policy, what existing legislation can be reformed and reused to solve newer conflicts?
2. Internal displacement has affected the Syrian nation just as much as external displacement. Between the destruction of infrastructure from missile attacks, even to Syrian citizens still dealing with the consequences of a major 7.8 magnitude Earthquake from 2023, millions of Syrians are internally displaced.<sup>43</sup> What measures can be taken to serve the internally displaced Syrians?
3. Many groups outside of the Syrian Government and Opposition have proven to hold alternative motives outside of resolving this conflict and bringing peace. What are the best ways to ensure that the nation's involvement with this issue is actually resolving the conflict?
4. Over 140 countries have been affected by an influx of Syrian refugees. If your nation has been affected, what has it done in order to protect refugees and asylum seekers' rights?
5. Children are the most vulnerable population in Syria. What steps can be taken to protect the children of Syria and ensure a healthy livelihood?

---

<sup>43</sup> Center for Disaster Philanthropy. "2023 Turkey-Syria Earthquake." *Center for Disaster Philanthropy*, Center for Disaster Philanthropy, 27 Mar. 2023



6. In the 2025 Syrian National Dialogue Conference, one of the major goals of the attendees was to reestablish and strengthen Syria's economy. What can be done to help encourage the expansion of Syria's global market?



## Works Cited

- “4.12.3. Child Labour and Child Trafficking.” *European Union Agency for Asylum*, 2024, [euaa.europa.eu/country-guidance-syria/4123-child-labour-and-child-trafficking](https://euaa.europa.eu/country-guidance-syria/4123-child-labour-and-child-trafficking).
- “Accountability in Syria - the Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights.” *The Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights*, 28 Mar. 2023, [www.ceasefire.org/accountability-in-syria/](http://www.ceasefire.org/accountability-in-syria/). Accessed 15 Sept. 2025.
- Benarbia, Said. “Syria and the UN Security Council: A Decade of Abysmal Failures.” *Opinio Juris*, 28 Apr. 2021, [opiniojuris.org/2021/04/28/syria-and-the-un-security-council-a-decade-of-abysmal-failures/](https://opiniojuris.org/2021/04/28/syria-and-the-un-security-council-a-decade-of-abysmal-failures/).
- Bowen, Dominic, et al. “Failing Syria: Assessing the Impact of UN Security Council Resolutions in Protecting and Assisting Civilians in Syria.” *Oxfam Policy & Practice*, 12 Mar. 2015, [policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/failing-syria-assessing-the-impact-of-un-security-council-resolutions-in-protecting-and-assisting-civilians-in-syria-346522/](https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/failing-syria-assessing-the-impact-of-un-security-council-resolutions-in-protecting-and-assisting-civilians-in-syria-346522/).
- Burke, Patrick J. “The Strategy Bridge.” *The Strategy Bridge*, 5 Jan. 2017, [thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/1/5/ceasefires-in-syria-a-post-mortem](https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/1/5/ceasefires-in-syria-a-post-mortem). Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.
- BWC Admin. “UN, Explained: The History of the United Nations Security Council Veto.” *Better World Campaign*, 9 Feb. 2025, [betterworldcampaign.org/peace-and-security/un-explained-the-history-of-the-united-nations-security-council-veto/](https://betterworldcampaign.org/peace-and-security/un-explained-the-history-of-the-united-nations-security-council-veto/).



ns-security-council-veto?gad\_source=1&gad\_campaignid=1524015720&gbraid=0AAA  
AADgBoGmTJiJzREvSTBkyPtOmJEeXc&gclid=CjwKCAjw2brFBhBOEiwAVJX5GG  
Mk-15ZHysO9WiWJdrE16-9IKcy4uWRq5sX1BUAlKtieD7j76BaSRoCtZYQAvD\_BwE.

Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.

Center for Disaster Philanthropy. “2023 Turkey-Syria Earthquake.” *Center for Disaster Philanthropy*, Center for Disaster Philanthropy, 27 Mar. 2023, [disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/2023-turkey-syria-earthquake/](https://disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/2023-turkey-syria-earthquake/).

Center for Preventive Action. “Conflict in Syria.” *Global Conflict Tracker*, Council on Foreign Relations, 14 May 2025, [www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-syria](https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-syria).

“Do Cease-Fires in Syria Work? We Checked the Data. – Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO).” *@PRIOrsearch*, 2021, [www.prio.org/comments/760](https://www.prio.org/comments/760). Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.

Guardian staff reporter. “Syrian President Blames Poorly Trained Police for Bloody Crackdown.” *The Guardian*, The Guardian, 18 May 2011, [www.theguardian.com/world/2011/may/18/syrian-president-police-crackdown](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/may/18/syrian-president-police-crackdown). Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.

Hasmik Egian, and Hasmik Egian. “The UN’s Mediation Role in Syria Has Become Irrelevant.” *PassBlue*, 20 Mar. 2025, [passblue.com/2025/03/19/the-uns-mediation-role-in-syria-has-become-irrelevant/](https://passblue.com/2025/03/19/the-uns-mediation-role-in-syria-has-become-irrelevant/).

“IIIM – International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism.” *Un.org*, 2016, [iiim.un.org/](https://iiim.un.org/)  
Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.



- Itani, Faysal. “A Trail of Broken Ceasefires in Syria.” *Atlantic Council*, 9 Mar. 2018, [www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/a-trail-of-broken-ceasefires-in-syria/](http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/a-trail-of-broken-ceasefires-in-syria/).
- Jazeera, Al. “Syrian President Al-Sharaa Unveils Transitional Government.” *Al Jazeera*, 30 Mar. 2025, [www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/30/syrian-president-unveils-transitional-government](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/30/syrian-president-unveils-transitional-government).
- OCHA. “ReliefWeb - Informing Humanitarians Worldwide.” *ReliefWeb*, 2019, [reliefweb.int/](http://reliefweb.int/).
- “Mandate and Timelines.” *OPCW*, 3 Mar. 2017, [opcw.unmissions.org/mandate-and-timelines/](http://opcw.unmissions.org/mandate-and-timelines/). Accessed 6 Sept. 2025.
- “NGOs Working in Syria.” *Lawyering Peace Class*, [www.lawyeringpeaceclass.com/ngos-working-in-syria](http://www.lawyeringpeaceclass.com/ngos-working-in-syria)
- “Northeast Syria: Military Recruitment of Children Persists.” *Human Rights Watch*, 2 Oct. 2024, [www.hrw.org/news/2024/10/02/northeast-syria-military-recruitment-children-persists](http://www.hrw.org/news/2024/10/02/northeast-syria-military-recruitment-children-persists).
- Omer, Sevil. “Syrian Refugee Crisis: Facts, Faqs, and How to Help.” *World Vision*, 16 Mar. 2023, [www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/syrian-refugee-crisis-facts](http://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/syrian-refugee-crisis-facts).
- Resolution 2118 (2013)*. 2013.
- “Security Council Unanimously Adopts Resolution 2254 (2015), Endorsing Road Map for Peace Process in Syria, Setting Timetable for Talks | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” *Un.org*, 18 Dec. 2015, [press.un.org/en/2015/sc12171.doc.htm?](http://press.un.org/en/2015/sc12171.doc.htm?)
- “Syria: Ceasefire under Strain as Violence and Aid Access Issues Persist in Sweida.” *UN News*, 6 Aug. 2025, [news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165588](http://news.un.org/en/story/2025/08/1165588).



“Syria: Fragile Ceasefire in Sweida “Largely Holding” amid Volatility.” *UN News*, 28 July 2025, [news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165512](https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165512).

*Syrian Democratic Council*. [www.syriandemocraticcouncil.us/1418-2/](http://www.syriandemocraticcouncil.us/1418-2/).

Syrian Network for Human Rights. “Summary of the Assad Regime’s Crimes against the Syrian People over the Last 14 Years | Syrian Network for Human Rights.” *Snhr.org*, 20 Dec. 2024, [snhr.org/blog/2024/12/20/summary-of-the-assad-regimes-crimes-against-the-syrian-people-over-the-last-14-years/](https://snhr.org/blog/2024/12/20/summary-of-the-assad-regimes-crimes-against-the-syrian-people-over-the-last-14-years/).

Syria, in. “The National Dialogue in Syria: A Step Forward or a Concerning Trajectory?” *Middle East Institute*, 2025, [www.mei.edu/publications/national-dialogue-syria-step-forward-or-concerning-trajectory](http://www.mei.edu/publications/national-dialogue-syria-step-forward-or-concerning-trajectory).

“The Syrian Conflict Explained.” *ShelterBox USA*, [www.shelterboxusa.org/syria/the-syrian-conflict-explained/](http://www.shelterboxusa.org/syria/the-syrian-conflict-explained/).

Tokmajyan, Armenak. “Bashar Al-Assad of Syria Has Been Ousted from Power.” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 9 Dec. 2024, [carnegieendowment.org/middle-east/diwan/2024/12/bashar-al-assad-of-syria-has-been-ousted-from-power?lang=en](https://carnegieendowment.org/middle-east/diwan/2024/12/bashar-al-assad-of-syria-has-been-ousted-from-power?lang=en).

UN News. “Syria.” *UN News*, United Nations, 7 Dec. 2018, [news.un.org/en/focus/syria](https://news.un.org/en/focus/syria).

UNHCR. “Syria Refugee Crisis Explained.” *Unrefugees.org*, The UN Refugee Agency, 13 Mar. 2025, [www.unrefugees.org/news/syria-refugee-crisis-explained/](https://www.unrefugees.org/news/syria-refugee-crisis-explained/).



---. “Syria Refugee Crisis Explained.” *Unrefugees.org*, The UN Refugee Agency, 13 Mar. 2025,  
[www.unrefugees.org/news/syria-refugee-crisis-explained/](http://www.unrefugees.org/news/syria-refugee-crisis-explained/).

UNICEF. “The Situation of Children in Syria.” *Www.unicef.org*, 2023,  
[www.unicef.org/syria/situation-children-syria](http://www.unicef.org/syria/situation-children-syria).

United Nations. “Security Council.” *Main.un.org*, 2025, [main.un.org/securitycouncil/en](http://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en).

“Who Are the Druze, and Why Is Israel Defending Them in Syria?” *AJC*, 24 July 2025,  
[www.ajc.org/news/who-are-the-druze-and-why-is-israel-defending-them-in-syria](http://www.ajc.org/news/who-are-the-druze-and-why-is-israel-defending-them-in-syria).

“With Millions of Syrians in Need, Security Council Adopts Resolution 2165 (2014) Directing Relief Delivery through More Border Crossings, across Conflict Lines | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” *Un.org*, 14 July 2014,  
[press.un.org/en/2014/sc11473.doc.htm?](http://press.un.org/en/2014/sc11473.doc.htm?)