

## 2021 Committee Topics

### **Topic A: Maintenance of International Peace and Security (COVID-19)**

The global community has been shaken in recent months as the [COVID-19 pandemic](#), a health situation caused by a deadly infectious disease, has spread the world over. As of May 2020, there have been at least 17 million reported cases and [600,000 deaths worldwide](#)— doubling between May and July.

Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, along with other United Nations leaders and bodies, have been keeping the Council apprised of the COVID-19 virus and its effects on peace, security, and health across the globe. Between April and June 2020, the Council considered, but ultimately did not act on, two possible resolutions on the subject: one related to ceasing worldwide hostilities in the face of the unprecedented health crisis, and one related to abandoning trade wars and unilateral sanctions.

Following months of illness, death, and the further exacerbation of humanitarian crises across the globe, the Security Council unanimously adopted [Resolution 2532](#) on 1 July 2020. This resolution calls for “[a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations, on its agenda](#)”, calling on all parties in armed conflict across the globe to engage in a “humanitarian pause” for a minimum of 90 days to enable access to medical and other humanitarian aid. Many organs of the United Nations are currently engaged with efforts to address concerns related to COVID-19. No one entity bears the total responsibility for the crisis and inter-agency along with international cooperation is essential for understanding and progress on this issue. For the purposes of this simulation, Representatives should focus their efforts on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security within the global experience of COVID-19 and how COVID -9 may impact other ongoing and future efforts by the Security Council.

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## **Topic B: The Situation in Kashmir**

The right of rule over the region of Kashmir has been a point of contention for decades between the Republic of India, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and those native to Kashmir and Jammu. The partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 resulted in the first Indo-Pakistani war over the region, with a ceasefire established in 1949. Following a period of relative peace, the second Indo-Pakistani War erupted in 1965, and rapidly increased violence across the region for 17 days, killing thousands before a Security Council-mandated ceasefire agreement was implemented and military personnel were ordered to withdraw from the area. Despite some armed skirmishes and a rise in Kashmiri resistance to Indian rule, the region remained in a state of tense stability until violent incidents between India-aligned Hindus and Pakistani-aligned Muslims began to mount in 2015 following increased Indian political influence in the region. This violence has continued to escalate in the area, and along the Line of Control between India and Pakistan, since India revoked Kashmir's status as a semi-autonomous region under the Indian Constitution on 5 August 2019.

The United Nations and the Security Council have been involved in the Kashmir dispute since its inception. Security Council [Resolution 39](#) established a three party commission — an Indian ally, a Pakistani ally, and a neutral third party to advise on a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The United Nations remained involved in the region up to and especially following the outbreak of the second Indo-Pakistani War in 1965, resulting in the Council demanding a ceasefire in [Resolution 211](#), and requiring the withdrawal of both Indian and Pakistani troops in [Resolution 215](#). The Kashmir issue has been brought before the Council many times over the years. Following India's revocation of the region's status in August 2019, the Council has received numerous updates from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations regarding mounting tension and violence in the region. In March 2020, Secretary-General António Guterres urged warring parties across the globe to engage in a worldwide ceasefire, as the people of the world deal with the unprecedented global pandemic from the COVID-19 virus; on 2 May 2020, the Secretary-General's spokesperson said this ceasefire should pertain to Kashmir and violence currently breaking out along the Line of Control within the region.

Despite mounting pressure from the United Nations and the international community to maintain peace within the region, violence continues to break out along the Line of Control, with at least 70 already killed in 2020. Tensions have been further exacerbated by the spread of COVID-19, which has resulted in curfews, lockdowns and blockades, which are trapping civilians in areas with rampant militant activity.

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