



II AASCA MUN

HSC

Topic A

Negotiating the removal of Soviet missiles from
Cuba

Topic B

Establishing Long-Term US-Soviet
Communication and Conflict Prevention
Mechanisms

Letter From The Committee Leaders

Dear delegates,

My name is Juan Manuel Bermudez and I am a senior at Lincoln School, Costa Rica. I have been part of more than 14 Model UN conferences, both nationally and internationally, and this will be my fourth time chairing or directing a committee. It is an honor to welcome you to the Historic Security Council (1962)- Resolving The Cuban Missile Crisis, in this Second AASCA Model UN. I am very excited to see how each of you approaches this important moment in history and the level of debate that will take place. I encourage you to do your best, enjoy the process, and most importantly, have fun while representing your countries. If you ever have a question or need guidance, please feel free to reach out during the conference or by email.

My name is Nico and I am a Junior at the American International School of Costa Rica. I have been doing MUN for the past three years and been in leadership positions for two. My favorite part of being a delegate in MUN is participating in debates and meeting new people. I am looking forward to this conference and meeting all of you. I hope that we can all have positive and constructive interactions, and make new connections. If you ever have a question or need guidance, please feel free to reach out during the conference or by email.

My name is Anjalie Asencio, and I am a Junior at the American School of Tegucigalpa in Honduras. I have been involved in Debate and MUN for over six years, and having lived in multiple countries, I've been fortunate to experience a wide variety of international conferences. It is an honor to welcome you to the Historic Security Council. I encourage you to bring your best ideas, engage thoughtfully with your fellow delegates, and most importantly, enjoy the process. If you ever have any questions or need guidance, please don't hesitate to reach out during the conference or by email.

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Introduction

Topic A

The Cuban missile crisis was a strained moment in history, where it nearly brought nations into another nuclear war. This was due to the U.S. discovering that the Soviet Union had placed nuclear missiles in Cuba, just 90 miles from American soil. Citizens were terrified of this discovery, and their nation's leaders had to act fast to avoid a possible nuclear disaster. The historic security council's mission is to figure out how diplomacy and negotiation could stop the missiles from being used. To do this, delegates need to understand both the U.S. and Soviet perspective of that time and consider viable diplomatic measures to ensure international security.

Having the missiles removed wasn't simple. Leaders had to find a solution where neither side looked weak or lost face while still protecting the rest of the world from a nuclear disaster. They had to weigh all options, military actions, secret deals, or public agreements, and think about the consequences of each and every one of those choices. During discussions, delegates will have to consider what is realistic and what could actually work without making tensions worse between the nations. The main goal is to create a plan that keeps citizens safe and maintains stable relations between nations.

This topic is also about compromise. The U.S. wanted the missiles gone immediately, but the Soviet Union didn't want to lose face or give up all their bargaining power. Delegates will explore ways in which both sides can get what they need to find a common ground to compromise. This is a chance to see how diplomacy can stop a global disaster and show that even in moments of extreme tension, smart negotiations and well thought out discussions can make a difference.

Key Terms

Topic A

- 1. Authoritarianism:** A system of government in which one person, or a small group of people, holds all of the power.
- 2. Bay of Pigs invasion:** A failed invasion of Cuba by the U.S. in an attempt to remove Fidel Castro before the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- 3. Cuban Embargo:** A long-term U.S. embargo on products going to Cuba, created to pressure the Cuban government into removing missiles.
- 4. Cuban Quarantine:** A naval blockade placed around Cuba to prevent the Soviet Union from bringing more weapons into the island.
- 5. John F. Kennedy:** The American president during the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- 6. Medium-Range Ballistic Missile (MRBM):** The nuclear missiles placed in Cuba by the USSR, with a range of about 1,500 miles.
- 7. Monroe Doctrine:** A U.S. policy stating that European nations should not interfere in the affairs of the United States or other countries in the Western Hemisphere.
- 8. Nikita Krushchev:** Prime Minister of the USSR during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

9. President Fulgencio Batista: The Cuban president before Castro, supported by the United States.

10. U2 Spy Plane: The American aircraft used to take surveillance photos of Soviet weapons in Cuba.

Historical Background

Topic A

The crisis started in October 1962, when multiple American U-2 spy planes captured pictures of medium range intercontinental ballistic missiles based in Cuba. The president of the time John F. Kennedy faced one of the most dangerous and difficult times in the Cold War as it was found out that those missiles were placed there by the Soviet Union and not only were they close to the U.S. they were just 90 miles away from Florida. With the knowledge that at any moment the missiles could reach and cause significant damage to Florida, Kennedy gathered his advisors to form the Executive Committee, or ExComm, who were responsible for coming up with possible solutions to the situation at hand. A solution that Kennedy chose to pursue was the Cuban Quarantine, which was where there was a naval blockade around the island meant to stop the transportation of more weapons from the Soviets. This “Quarantine” was aimed to pressure the Soviet Union to remove the missiles from Cuban soil peacefully while showing the American strength in their military.

This crisis however did not just start out of nowhere. It started after the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 where there was an unsuccessful U.S. attempt to overthrow the communist Cuban leader Fidel Castro and replace him with a democratically elected president in favor of the U.S. government, like that of President Fulgencio Batista. After the failed attempt, the relations between Cuba and the United States started to deteriorate, and it pushed Cuba closer to the Soviet Union to have Castro continue his regime. This opened the pathway to good relations between the two leaders at the time, Castro and Nikita Khrushchev, and an opportunity to place nuclear weapons on Cuban soil that just so happen to also be close to American soil in order to counter the U.S. placed missiles in Turkey.

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After the weapons came to light, intense negotiation between Washington and Moscow began. Each had their own demands, with Kennedy demanding that the missiles be removed immediately, while Khrushchev wanted guarantees that the U.S. would not invade Cuba. As the negotiations went on, secret messages were exchanged between the two nations promising a compromise that the Soviet Union would remove its missiles from Cuban soil as long as the United States promised to not invade Cuba and also remove their own missiles from Turkey. The terms were agreed to by October 28, 1962, and the missiles were removed, with the U.S. removing the blockade as well. This crisis became a historic point in history, showing that even at the height of tension between two nuclear-powered nations, careful diplomacy and compromise could prevent a nuclear war.

Current Situation

Topic A

Lately, tensions around nuclear weapons and regional power have been rising worldwide. The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis is ended through a direct deal between Cuba, the United States, and the Soviet Union, but the modern world is more complex, with many nuclear powers and new regions of tension around the world. The war in Ukraine has revived fears of possible nuclear weapon use and escalation. At the same time, modern missile deployments and military postures in Europe and Asia have raised new concerns that a crisis could occur again under different conditions.

International responses have been strong and wide-reaching. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United States have increased their military cooperation and readiness in Eastern Europe in response to Russian missile threats. Russia has also warned that it could deploy new missiles if the United States places additional systems in Germany or elsewhere in Europe. In Asia, countries such as China and India are being urged to join arms control talks to prevent regional tensions from growing. Global alliances are now working together to prevent any more escalation while keeping diplomatic channels open.

Recent statistics show that global nuclear arsenals remain at high levels. Even though full details are classified, experts believe that several nations are working on new weapons systems, including hypersonic and medium-range missiles. At the same time, incidents like military drills near borders and ships entering disputed waters are happening more often. Compared to much of the post–Cold War era, the current environment is far more unpredictable.

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As of this moment, there are still tensions between nations, but they are under control. However, unlike in 1962 where the tensions were in the certain region of Cuba, today most tensions are spread across several nations and regions like Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Another difference compared to the past is the modern and advanced technology, weapons and artificial intelligence. This makes negotiations harder although we still have, if not even better, communication and negotiation open than in previous times.

If we are looking ahead, the main influences are the United States, Russia, China, and NATO. With the numerous rising tensions across the world, the best way to relieve the tension is through diplomacy, as done during the Cuban Missile Crisis. There are still numerous other issues to be resolved, such as keeping direct communication between nations and negotiating before using military force. Another advantage we have today as a modernized society is social platforms as a form of communication widespread and can help prevent conflicts bringing global attention to the conflict. However, one must be careful as harmful media coverage may also have negative consequences and could potentially make the conflicts worse.

Block Positions

Topic A

Western Block:

The Western Block was a part of the side that strongly supported the removal of Soviet missiles from Cuba because they saw it as a direct threat to their security, especially the United States, as the closest missile was only about 90 miles from the Island. They emphasized backing the doctrine that no hostile power should place offensive weapons so close to the Western Hemisphere, as well as ensuring that nuclear deterrence remained credible. The Western Block also favored creating long-term communication and conflict prevention mechanisms, such as the “hotline” between the United States and the Soviet Union, that followed the crisis. The Block's common interests included maintaining alliance stability through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), preventing communist expansion, and maintaining stability among democratic and capitalist states. Because of these interests, they strongly advocated for the immediate removal of the missiles and were only willing to consider additional agreements if they ensured long-term security.

- **Countries/Allies:**

- United States
- Canada
- United Kingdom
- West Germany
- France
- Italy
- Japan
- Australia
- NATO member states

Eastern Block:

The Eastern Block's position during the crisis focused on expanding the Soviet Union's military reach and protecting its allies, especially Cuba. The Soviet Union placed missiles in Cuba to make up for its disadvantage in missile range compared to the United States. The Eastern Block argued for removal of U.S. missiles near Soviet borders and sought assurances that Cuba would not be invaded. At the same time, they backed long-term communication or conflict prevention mechanisms only as long as they did not weaken Soviet strategic advantage. The Eastern Block focused on defending communist nations, keeping global power balanced with the West, and reinforcing the Soviet Union's international reputation. For that reason, they avoided agreements that could make them appear weaker.

- **Countries/Allies:**

- Soviet Union
- Cuba
- East Germany
- Czechoslovakia
- Poland
- Hungary
- Other Warsaw Pact states

Non-Aligned/Developing-world Block:

The Non-Aligned Block wanted to stay neutral and avoid being controlled by either superpower. During the crisis, most members stayed out of direct conflict, instead calling for peaceful talks, nuclear control, and respect for sovereignty. They supported ways to stop similar tensions from happening again and rejected the idea of big powers forcing smaller countries to choose sides. Their main goals were independence, development, peace, and avoiding nuclear war. This often placed them in a middle ground role, encouraging both sides to negotiate.

- **Countries/Allies:**

- **India**
- **Indonesia**
- **Egypt**
- **Ghana**
- **Nigeria**
- **Asian, African, Latin American states (members of Non-Aligned movement)**

Latin America/Caribbean Block:

This regional block had a mixed position because some states (like Cuba) were aligned with the Soviet Union, while others were more closely tied to the U.S. The core interest for many Latin American countries was avoiding being the staging ground for nuclear warfare or receiving military intervention from either superpower. For Cuba, the main focus was gaining protection from a possible U.S. invasion and keeping support from the Soviet Union. Other countries prioritized regional stability and respects for their sovereignty. They supported long-term efforts to prevent future conflicts and opposed foreign powers turning their region into a stage for superpower rivalry. Their shared goals were to stay independent in foreign policy and avoid the destruction that could come from becoming a Cold War battleground.

• Countries/Allies:

- **Cuba**
- **México**
- **Brazil**
- **Argentina**
- **Others in Latin America and the Caribbean**

Guiding Questions

Topic A

1. To what extent should Cuba have been included in the negotiations determining its national security?
2. If the U.S. had opted for an immediate military strike instead of a naval blockade and diplomacy, what would have been the most likely short-term and long-term consequences for the future of the Cold War?
3. Did the way the U.S. and the Soviet Union handled the negotiations set a stage and standard for future international crisis negotiations?
4. What role did secrecy and intelligence play in guiding the direction of the negotiations?
5. Was Kennedy's choice of a naval blockade an act of restraint or a hidden show of force?
6. To what extent can compromise during the crisis be considered as a victory for diplomacy, or was it just a temporary pause in a larger power struggle?
7. To what extent were the leaders' actions driven by concern for global survival rather than a primary motivation to preserve their respective national power?
8. How did the final deal shift the balance of power between the U.S., the Soviet Union, and Cuba?

9. How did the crisis empower or compromise the position of Fidel Castro and Cuba itself, given that they were largely sidelined during the critical negotiations regarding their territory?

10. If the existence of the Soviet missiles had been revealed to the American public before President Kennedy had a peaceful plan, how might public panic and pressure have significantly altered the negotiation strategy?

Introduction

Topic B

After the Cuban missile crisis, it became clear that the United States and the Soviet Union needed more effective ways to communicate. Misunderstandings had brought the world to the edge of nuclear war, and no nation wanted to risk such a scenario again. Because of this urgent need for stability, this topic focuses on developing long-term systems, such as hotlines or treaties, to prevent future crises. Delegates will need to consider what makes these systems reliable and how to ensure that small mistakes never escalate into global disasters.

Building on this growing awareness of risk, the broader context of the Cold War remained full of tension, even though the two superpowers never fought directly. They competed in nuclear weapons, the space race, and global influence, which fueled fear and suspicion on both sides. In this environment of constant pressure, both nations prepared for the worst. Delegates need to figure out how to reduce tension without completely changing the political beliefs or systems of either country. The goal is to keep the world safe while respecting the balance of power.

With these historical challenges in mind, preventing future nuclear crises is all about trust and collaboration. Ideas like communication hotlines, arms control agreements, and emergency protocols were suggested after 1962 and continue to play an essential role today. Delegates will explore how these strategies could have been stronger or introduced earlier to avoid unnecessary fear. Studying this topic shows how countries can work together to prevent disasters while still protecting themselves.

Key Terms

Topic B

- 1. Arms Race:** A phase of the Cold War in which the U.S. and the USSR competed to build and develop atomic weapons first.
- 2. Brinkmanship:** A strategy in which a country pushes dangerous situations, including nuclear threats, to the edge in hopes of preventing conflict through intimidation.
- 3. Cold War:** A historical period from about 1947 to 1991 when the United States and the Soviet Union competed for global influence between Democracy and Communism without direct large-scale warfare.
- 4. Communism:** A political and economic system where the government controls resources and distributes them based on need, practiced notably by the USSR.
- 5. Containment:** A U.S. strategy aimed at stopping the spread of communism through alliances like NATO and involvement in foreign conflicts.
- 6. Détente:** A period of eased tensions between the U.S. and the USSR after the Cuban Missile Crisis, with the goal of reducing the risk of conflict.
- 7. Fidel Castro:** Prime Minister of Cuba from 1959 to 1976, who established and expanded communism in the country.

8. Iron Curtain: A symbolic boundary dividing communist Eastern Europe from democratic Western Europe during the Cold War.

9. McCarthyism: A movement led by Senator Joseph McCarthy in which the U.S. government aggressively pursued suspected communists, often without solid evidence.

10. Space Race: A Cold War competition between the U.S. and the USSR to achieve major milestones in space exploration, especially landing humans on the Moon.

Historical Background

Topic B

The decades-long conflict between the USSR and the United States known as the Cold War, emerged directly from the unsettled geopolitical landscape of World War II. Cause and effect became visible almost immediately, the ideological division between communism and liberal democracy, shaped the reorganization of Eastern Europe after the Yalta Conference in February 1945, creating opposing spheres of influence that neither side trusted. This mistrust deepened in 1946 when both President Truman and Joseph Stalin publicly condemned each other's political systems. These early confrontations laid the groundwork for escalation, as each action taken by one superpower reinforced the other's belief that this conflict was inevitable.

There was also an increased importance of weaponry, with the American Military conducting the "Baker Test" on July 25th 1946, which was a nuclear test conducted underwater, this was done not only to test the weapon, but also to see how an underwater explosion would affect nearby ships, this was a part of the Arms Race, in which both the U.S. and USSR attempted to have better weapons than the other. Meanwhile, the Soviet-backed Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia in 1948, and Communist Mao Zedong taking control of China in 1949 strengthened the American perception that communism was expanding globally, making future confrontations more likely. The UN, still in early years, issued statements urging peaceful dialogue, but member states were too divided to take unified action on East–West tensions.

The Cold War in 1950's America was defined by fear, with increasing fear of Communist spies and increased weapon testing with both superpowers becoming increasingly close to building the atomic bomb. Tensions only became stronger with the start of the Korean War in 1950, during this war the Soviet government provided weapons for North Korea whereas the U.S. supported South Korea. Throughout the 1950s communism also continued to spread, but not exclusively in the USSR's bordering countries, a pattern started where communist support systems were set up in countries such as Iran and Guatemala, only for the U.S. to dispel those and replace them with friendly regimes. In 1957 the competition became even more widespread with the Space Race taking over, the countries each built rockets and other space crafts with the end goal of being the first to have an astronaut land on the moon. Finally by January of 1959 Cuba was under Fidel Castro's regime.

These accumulating pressures made the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis almost unavoidable. The early 1960s already showed deepening divisions, symbolized by the construction on the Berlin Wall beginning in 1961. Even once the Cuban Missile Crisis was resolved in 1962, which was a big step in non-violent collaboration between the two countries, the Cold War was still far from over. With the U.S. becoming more involved in the Vietnam War, another conflict fueled by the battle of the warring ideologies, which wasn't ended until 1970 by President Richard Nixon. A major turning point occurred when Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union in 1985, promoting collaboration with the United States, and more will to work with them than any previous leaders. By 1986 President Ronald Reagan and Gorbachev began major arms-reduction talks, laying the groundwork for agreements such as the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which removed entire classes of nuclear weapons placed around the globe.

Current Situation

Topic B

Although the Soviet Union no longer exists, its approach to nuclear diplomacy and state-controlled communication still shapes global security today. One of the most relevant examples of this legacy can be seen in states that adopted similar political structures including North Korea, which became a communist state in the aftermath of the Korean War, and remains not only a communist state to this day, but also a completely isolated nation. With its current supreme leader Kim Jong Un, and his family, the Kim's have been in power ever since North Korea became a totalitarian state. It is important to understand how its behavior illustrates the long-term effects of Cold War dynamics on modern crisis management.

North Korea's extreme isolation, strict media control, and reliance on nuclear deterrence reflect strategies first used by the USSR to maintain internal stability and resist external pressure. These policies highlight why reliable communication systems remain essential, when states restrict outside information or shut down diplomatic channels, misunderstandings and escalation risks rise sharply. This mirrors the fundamental issue that nearly triggered nuclear war in 1962, miscommunication between nuclear powers.

While North Korea has developed nuclear capabilities with assistance from former Soviet partners, its significance today lies less in its arsenal and more in the absence of consistent dialogue mechanisms such as hotlines, verification agreements, or crisis protocols. Unlike the U.S., Soviet relationship after the Cuban Missile Crisis with the "Hotline Agreement" (1963) and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968) created predictable channels. Although communication with North Korea remains irregular, highly politicized, and vulnerable to collapse.

Despite North Korea being so isolated from the rest of the world, they still have contact with Russia and China. North Korea rarely trades, but when they do it is frequently with China, another totalitarian state formed during the Cold War. North Korea also works very closely with Russia's military and they have agreed to protect each other in the case of war. North Korea has provided Russia with ammunition to assist in their conflict with Ukraine, and Russia in return has provided North Korea with advanced weaponry.

Ultimately, the relevance of North Korea to this topic is not the country itself, but the lesson it represents. When communication fails, nuclear intimidation becomes far more dangerous. The Cold War showed that long-term stability requires dependable channels of dialogue, transparent verification processes, and international cooperation, such mechanisms the UN continues to support through bodies like the IAEA and Security Council. The persistence of Cold War-style isolation today underscores why these tools remain indispensable for preventing future crises.

Guiding Questions

Topic B

1. What new types of crisis prevention mechanisms would have been necessary to address Cold War issues other than military standoffs?
2. Did the creation of the hotline between Washington and Moscow truly improve communication, or did it only serve as a symbolic gesture?
3. What modern tools today could serve a similar purpose to the 1963 hotline in preventing misunderstandings and opening communication?
4. How might today's open digital communication and media either help or worsen crisis prevention between nuclear powers?
5. How can a global organization like the UN play a stronger role in maintaining communication and preventing future nuclear standoffs/conflicts?
6. In the context of the Cold War, is achieving a lasting peace a realistic goal, or is the best achievable outcome simply finding ways to manage a state of high-stakes tension?
7. How effective can a technological solution be in preventing nuclear conflict when the core issue is deep ideological mistrust and differing worldviews?
8. Can there truly ever be trust between two rival nations that are ideological opposites?

Guiding Questions

Topic B

9. To what extent did the recent memory of World War II serve as a genuine deterrent to both the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the crisis negotiations?

10. For the average American and Soviet citizen at the time, what defined "winning" the Cuban Missile Crisis, and did their leaders' actions align with that popular definition?

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