



The Winchester School Jebel Ali

UNSC Junior

**Addressing Cyber Threats, Cybersecurity and Promoting
International Cooperation on Cybersecurity Issues**

Letter from the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

Greetings!

It is our absolute honour to welcome you to the UNSC Junior Committee at WINMUN 2024!

The UN Security Council (UNSC) committee, consisting of 15 member states, holds a central role in addressing global peace and security. With its power to authorize actions and resolutions, including peacekeeping missions and sanctions, the UNSC remains at the forefront of international efforts to manage conflicts and maintain stability.

Our foremost objective for this conference is to ensure that all delegates acquire fresh knowledge, enhance their abilities, and have an enjoyable experience. We encourage all delegates to actively participate in discussions, engage in constructive dialogues with fellow delegates and make new connections.

While this background guide is a great resource, we sincerely urge you to make use of other sources for your research, and discover more about the stance of your country on the agendas put forth for debate. The WINMUN website is a great place to start, with Delegate Starter Packs and Rules of Procedure listed under the Conference Documents tab.

If you require any additional information or assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We extend our best wishes for your preparations and eagerly anticipate the contributions you have in store!

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Vocabulary

[Cybersecurity]: Practice of preventing and protecting electronic devices from malicious cyber attacks.

[Cybercrime]: A range of illicit and illegal activities committed online.

[Malware]: Software that is specifically designed to damage, or gain unauthorised access to a computer system.

[Data Integrity]: Maintenance of accurate and reliable data throughout its life cycle.

[IP theft]: Obtaining ideas, expressions or creative expressions of an organisation/individual illegally.

[Ransomware]: A type of software designed to block access to a computer system until a sum of money is paid.

[Encryption]: Information is transformed into ciphertext by the process of encryption, a type of data protection. The original plaintext data cannot be accessed by anybody other than authorised individuals who possess the key to decode the code.

[Zero-Day Vulnerabilities]: A zero-day vulnerability is a flaw in a computer system's security that its creators, owners, or anybody else who can mitigate it is unaware of. Threat actors may use a zero-day exploit, also known as a zero-day attack to take advantage of the vulnerability until it is fixed.

[Digital Diplomacy]: The idea that a country should be in charge of its own Cybersecurity laws and digital space.

Introduction to the Agenda

The focal point of the UNSC's agenda is of utmost importance, as it navigates the landscape of cyberspace, where the convergence of technology and security presents pressing challenges requiring immediate attention. In an interconnected world where the mere click of a button can reverberate through global affairs, the UNSC recognizes the urgent necessity of addressing the multifaceted dimensions of cyber threats and cybersecurity. While the digital realm serves as a catalyst for progress and innovation, it also serves as a stage where potential disruptions, attacks, and vulnerabilities pose threats to the peace and security of nations.

As the UNSC embarks on the endeavour to tackle cyber threats and encourage international cooperation on cybersecurity issues, it underscores the significance of comprehending the evolving nature of these threats. Ranging from state-sponsored cyber-espionage to actions by malicious non-state actors, it is imperative to acknowledge that the spectrum of challenges demands a comprehensive and collaborative approach.

Moreover, the UNSC emphasizes the importance of nurturing international cooperation in the face of cyber threats. Recognizing that these threats transcend national borders, the committee aims to facilitate dialogue and collaboration among member states, fostering the development of norms, protocols, and mechanisms that elevate cybersecurity globally. Through diplomatic discourse and strategic collaboration, member states have the opportunity to chart a course towards a more secure and resilient digital future—one that upholds the principles of peace, stability, and cooperation in our increasingly interconnected world.

This conference extends an invitation to member states to delve into the intricacies of cybersecurity, encouraging exploration of the delicate balance between ensuring the free flow of information and safeguarding against cyber threats that have the potential to destabilize nations. Delegates are urged to scrutinize the implications of cyber attacks on critical infrastructure, national security, and the global economy.

Background of the Agenda

In recent years, there has been a transformation in the character and extent of cyber threats witnessed worldwide. No longer confined to mere criminal activities, these threats have expanded to include state-sponsored cyber-espionage, cyber warfare, and assaults on critical infrastructure. The swift advancement of technology has given rise to a diverse array of cyber threats capable of compromising the stability and security of nations.

The growing dependence on digital infrastructure for essential services, communication, and economic transactions has intensified the intersection of technology and national security. Cybersecurity has risen to the forefront as a paramount concern, with malicious actors exploiting vulnerabilities to compromise sensitive information, disrupt critical services, and undermine the peace and stability of nations.

Navigating the delicate equilibrium between guarding against cyber threats and upholding the principles of the free flow of information is crucial. As nations enhance their cybersecurity measures, it is imperative to avoid unduly restrictive practices that might hinder the open exchange of ideas and obstruct the free flow of information across borders. Striking the right balance ensures the protection of critical digital infrastructure while maintaining the principles of an open and accessible cyberspace, where the unimpeded exchange of information remains paramount.

Recognizing the interconnected nature of the global economy, the agenda also delves into the economic ramifications of cyber threats. Cyberattacks on financial institutions, intellectual property theft, and economic espionage can trigger a chain reaction of consequences, from disruptions in financial markets to the erosion of investor confidence, leading to economic downturns, loss of intellectual capital, and severe disruptions in trade. The increasing sophistication of cyber threats underscores the urgency for member states to collaboratively strengthen defenses, as the economic repercussions from these incidents not only imperil individual nations but reverberate across the entire international economic landscape, necessitating a concerted and proactive response.

Key Stakeholders

[Governments]: Since national governments are in charge of developing and putting into practice cybersecurity policies and plans, they are the main stakeholders. They are in charge of creating legal frameworks, defending vital infrastructure, and organising internal reactions to cyberattacks. Governments are essential for maintaining a coordinated national strategy, enforcing rules, and setting the standard for cybersecurity policies within their respective domains.

[International Organisations]: In order to promote international collaboration, establish standards, and coordinate efforts to counter global cyber threats, organisations like the United Nations (UN), INTERPOL, Europol, and NATO are essential in setting norms and facilitating international cooperation. These organisations offer a forum for international agreements on cybersecurity, standard-setting, and diplomatic negotiations. They work on establishing global norms and fostering collaboration to address cyber threats.

[Academic and Research Institutions]: Through research, instruction, and the creation of creative solutions, universities and research centres support cybersecurity. Research institutes are essential for expanding our understanding of cybersecurity and offering new perspectives on potential threats. Academic Institutions produce experts who can address and tackle cyber security issues by collaborating and researching.

[Civil Society]: Advocacy groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) frequently contribute to awareness-raising, the advancement of digital rights, and the accountability of corporations and governments for their cybersecurity policies. As a watchdog, civil society encourages responsibility and openness in the creation and use of cybersecurity safeguards.

[Users Individually]: End users—citizens and workers alike—are crucial participants in putting cybersecurity best practices into effect and fostering a safe digital environment. Users help to increase the overall resilience of cybersecurity and serve as the first line of defence against some

cyberthreats. By utilising safe online procedures, becoming informed of possible dangers, and adopting best practices, individual users may contribute to the preservation of cybersecurity.

Key Issues

1. Global Coordination and Information Sharing:

Cyber threats often transcend national borders, necessitating international cooperation. The challenge lies in establishing effective mechanisms for global coordination and information sharing to ensure timely and accurate exchange of threat intelligence. Countries face difficulties in sharing sensitive information due to concerns about sovereignty and the potential misuse of shared data. Establishing trust frameworks and protocols for secure information exchange is crucial to address this issue.

2. Legal and Jurisdictional Challenges:

Cyberspace operates in a complex legal landscape where defining jurisdiction and applying existing laws can be challenging. Cybercriminals exploit jurisdictional gaps, making it imperative to harmonize international legal frameworks. Developing and adopting consistent international laws related to cyber activities, extradition treaties, and prosecution procedures is essential. This involves overcoming differences in legal systems and definitions of cybercrimes across countries.

3. Capacity Building and Skill Shortage:

The rapid evolution of cyber threats requires a skilled workforce capable of defending against sophisticated attacks. Many countries face a shortage of cybersecurity professionals, hindering their ability to effectively address cyber threats. Encouraging education and training programs, both nationally and internationally, is vital. Collaborative efforts to share best practices and expertise can help bridge the cybersecurity skill gap.

4. Emerging Technologies and Security Challenges:

The rise of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and the Internet of Things introduces new dimensions to cybersecurity challenges. Securing these technologies against evolving threats is a global concern. International cooperation is essential to establish norms and standards for securing emerging technologies. Collaborative research and development efforts can help anticipate and mitigate potential cyber threats associated with these advancements.

5. Critical Infrastructure Protection:

Critical infrastructure, such as energy grids, transportation systems, and healthcare networks, is increasingly interconnected and vulnerable to cyberattacks. A successful attack on critical infrastructure in one country can have cascading effects globally. Enhancing international cooperation for the protection of critical infrastructure involves sharing threat intelligence, implementing standardized security measures, and conducting joint exercises to test and improve the resilience of interconnected systems.

Questions to consider

- What measures can be implemented to enhance accountability in cyberspace?
- How can member states collaborate to enhance global cybersecurity norms, protocols, and mechanisms in the face of evolving cyber threats?
- What innovative approaches can be explored to strike a balance between safeguarding against cyber threats and preserving the free flow of information across borders?
- In what ways can the UNSC facilitate diplomatic discourse and strategic collaboration to forge a more secure and resilient digital future?
- What strategies can nations employ to balance the need for heightened cybersecurity with ethical considerations such as privacy and freedom of expression?
- How can member states collaborate to enhance economic resilience against cyber threats to safeguard critical financial property?
- How can member states address the implications of cyber attacks on critical infrastructure, national security, and the global economy in the context of the cybersecurity agenda?

Past UN Actions

1. UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security:

The UN has convened multiple sessions of the GGE, a group of experts from member states, to discuss and make recommendations on issues related to cybersecurity. GGE reports have emphasized the importance of international norms, rules, and principles for responsible state behavior in cyberspace.

2. The Tallinn Manual:

Although not a direct UN initiative, the Tallinn Manual, developed by experts, including legal scholars and UN members of councils, provides guidance on how international law, including existing laws of armed conflict, applies to cyber conflicts. The manual has been referenced and considered in discussions within the UN and other international forums.

3. Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security:

The UN General Assembly established an OEWG to further study and make recommendations on norms, rules, and principles for responsible state behavior in cyberspace. The OEWG complements the work of the GGE and provides a forum for all UN member states to contribute to discussions on cybersecurity.

4. Capacity Building Initiatives:

The UN, through various agencies and programs, has supported capacity-building efforts to enhance the cybersecurity capabilities of member states, especially in developing regions. These initiatives include training programs, workshops, and the sharing of best practices to improve the overall global cybersecurity posture.

5. Cybersecurity and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

The UN recognizes the role of cybersecurity in achieving the SDGs and has integrated discussions on cybersecurity into broader conversations about sustainable development. Cybersecurity is seen as essential for the protection of critical infrastructure, fostering innovation, and ensuring the secure use of technology for social and economic development.

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AGENDA 2:

Addressing the Humanitarian Crisis in Syria

Vocabulary

[Internationally Displaced Persons]: People who are inside their own nation's boundaries yet were compelled to flee their homes. These people are called Internationally Displaced Person (IDP)

[Humanitarian Needs]: Following a catastrophic event, individuals need basic, culturally relevant products and supplies to preserve their health, privacy, and dignity; to take care of their personal hygiene requirements; to cook and consume food; and to reach the required degrees of thermal comfort. Water containers, hygiene goods, stoves and cooking sets, clothes, blankets, and beds are a few examples of these things.

[Disaster Relief]: Disaster relief is the word for the urgent aid and support given in the wake of a catastrophe, such as a natural disaster or armed war.

[UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)]: The UN agency responsible for protecting and supporting refugees and displaced persons.

[Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)]: Non-Governmental Organisations are independent groups that promote and aid in humanitarian causes; they frequently collaborate with governments and international organisations.

[The Syrian Arab Red Crescent]: The Syrian Arab Red Crescent is a humanitarian organisation that offers assistance and emergency medical care in Syria. It caters to people of all ages by providing important needs.

Introduction to the Agenda

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is convened to tackle one of the most urgent and enduring challenges confronting the global community: the humanitarian crisis in Syria. Since the outbreak of civil conflict in 2011, Syria has faced widespread violence, mass displacement, and an urgent humanitarian situation requiring immediate attention. The ramifications of this crisis extend beyond the country's borders, affecting neighbouring nations and resonating globally. As the principal entity responsible for upholding international peace and security, the UNSC plays a crucial role in coordinating endeavours to alleviate human suffering, promote stability, and strive for a sustainable resolution to the multifaceted challenges confronting the Syrian population.

The impact of the conflict on the civilian population has been profound, resulting in extensive displacement, loss of life, and the breakdown of essential services. According to the United Nations, millions of Syrians have been internally displaced, with millions more seeking refuge in neighbouring countries and beyond, creating one of the largest refugee crises of our era. This crisis has given rise to a range of intricate issues, including massive internal displacement, an overwhelming refugee exodus, and severe disruptions to vital services.

As delegates of the UNSC, your responsibility is to engage in thorough deliberations to formulate resolutions that prioritise the delivery of humanitarian aid, address the root causes of the crisis, and contribute to the pursuit of a sustainable political solution. Delegates are encouraged to explore collaborative and inventive approaches that transcend political differences, striving for a collective commitment to peace, security, and the well-being of the affected population in Syria and its neighbouring regions.

Background of the Agenda

The humanitarian crisis in Syria represents a catastrophic outcome of socio-political upheavals that commenced in 2011, evolving into a prolonged and devastating conflict. Rooted in enduring grievances, exacerbated by regional dynamics, and influenced by the broader context of the Arab Spring, the crisis has left an enduring impact on the Syrian population.

Its origins lie in the pro-democracy protests that swept through Syria in early 2011, part of the broader wave of uprisings in the Arab world. The Syrian government's response, marked by a heavy-handed crackdown, fueled resentment and resulted in the escalation of unrest. What followed was a complex civil war, involving various factions with divergent interests, both domestic and international. The conflict has not only claimed countless lives but has also given rise to a humanitarian catastrophe with far-reaching consequences.

The toll on the civilian population has been staggering, with millions internally displaced and an unprecedented number seeking refuge beyond Syria's borders. The United Nations estimates that nearly half of the pre-war population requires humanitarian assistance. The impact of the conflict extends beyond immediate physical needs, affecting mental health, education, and the social fabric of Syrian communities. Despite the dedication and tireless efforts of humanitarian organizations, substantial challenges persist in reaching all those in need, given the complex and often volatile nature of conflict zones.

The refugee crisis stemming from the Syrian conflict has posed a global humanitarian challenge. Neighbouring countries, particularly Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, have absorbed a significant influx of refugees, straining their resources and societal structures. The plight of Syrian refugees has transcended regional boundaries, necessitating a coordinated international response to provide support for both displaced Syrians and their host communities.

Key Stakeholders

[United Nations (UN)]: The UN, through agencies like the UNHCR and UNICEF, is a primary actor in coordinating humanitarian efforts. It provides aid, establishes refugee camps, and works to ensure the protection and rights of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). The UN's involvement is crucial for the legitimacy of international humanitarian efforts in Syria, and its agencies have the expertise and resources to address the multifaceted needs of the affected population. The UN is a significant stakeholder due to its importance in humanitarian efforts.

[Syrian Government]: The Syrian government is responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of its citizens. This includes facilitating access for humanitarian organisations, cooperating with aid distribution, and potentially participating in peace talks to find a political resolution. The cooperation of the Syrian government is essential for the effective delivery of aid and the establishment of a stable environment for the affected population.

[International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Red Crescent Movement]: The ICRC and the Red Crescent Movement provide immediate humanitarian assistance, medical care, and protection for those affected by the crisis. They operate independently and work in areas that might be difficult for other organisations to access. The ICRC's neutral and impartial stance allows it to operate in conflict zones, providing essential services and facilitating communication between conflicting parties. The ICRC and Red Crescent will attend to needs of citizens in Syria.

[Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)]: NGOs, such as Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) and CARE, are often on the ground, providing medical assistance, food, shelter, and other essential services. They play a crucial role in addressing the immediate needs of the affected population. NGOs contribute flexibility, innovation, and grassroots connections, allowing them to respond quickly to emerging needs and reach vulnerable populations.

Key Issues

1. Violence and Conflict:

The ongoing violence and conflict in Syria represent a fundamental challenge to addressing the humanitarian crisis. The conflict, which began in 2011, has resulted in widespread displacement, destruction of infrastructure, and loss of lives. The multifaceted nature of the conflict involves various factions, including the Syrian government, rebel groups, and extremist organizations. The constant threat of violence impedes humanitarian access, making it difficult to deliver aid to those in need. Resolving the conflict and establishing lasting peace is crucial for addressing the root causes of the crisis.

2. Displacement and Refugees:

The Syrian crisis has led to one of the largest displacement and refugee situations globally. Millions of Syrians have fled their homes, seeking safety and shelter both within the country and across international borders. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) face challenges such as lack of access to basic services and vulnerability to further displacement. Refugees, on the other hand, often confront issues like inadequate living conditions, restricted mobility, and difficulties in accessing education and healthcare in host countries. Addressing the needs of displaced populations requires coordinated efforts from the international community.

3. Humanitarian Access and Aid Delivery:

Humanitarian organizations face significant challenges in reaching affected populations due to security concerns, bureaucratic obstacles, and limitations imposed by various parties involved in the conflict. The obstruction of humanitarian access hampers the delivery of essential aid, including food, medical supplies, and shelter. Negotiating safe access routes and ensuring the security of aid workers are critical components of addressing this issue. International diplomatic efforts are essential to create an environment conducive to unhindered humanitarian operations.

4. Healthcare and Medical Services:

The Syrian crisis has severely strained the healthcare system, with hospitals and medical facilities being targeted, damaged, or destroyed. The shortage of medical personnel, supplies, and infrastructure has profound implications for the health and well-being of the population. The lack of access to healthcare services exacerbates the suffering of civilians, particularly those with chronic illnesses and injuries. Diseases that are otherwise preventable or treatable become major threats, and maternal and child health is at risk. Rebuilding and reinforcing the healthcare infrastructure are vital components of any comprehensive humanitarian response.

5. Education and Youth Development:

The protracted nature of the crisis has disrupted education for millions of Syrian children and adolescents, jeopardizing their future prospects and contributing to a lost generation. Many schools have been damaged or repurposed for other uses, and teachers and students face daily threats to their safety. The lack of educational opportunities can lead to long-term consequences, including increased vulnerability to recruitment by armed groups, reduced economic prospects, and a diminished ability to rebuild the country in the aftermath of the crisis. Prioritizing education and creating safe learning environments are crucial for addressing this aspect of the humanitarian crisis.

Questions to Consider

- What are the most pressing humanitarian needs in Syria and how can they be addressed effectively?
- What challenges exist in accessing humanitarian aid in affected areas?
- How can the international community work with the Syrian government and other stakeholders to ensure unimpeded access?
- How can the safety and protection of civilians, including vulnerable groups like children, be ensured during humanitarian operations?
- What measures can be taken to prevent human rights abuses and violations?
- What strategies can be employed to address the root causes of the humanitarian crisis and promote long-term stability in Syria?

Past UN Action

1. UN Security Council Resolutions:

The UN Security Council has passed numerous resolutions related to the Syrian conflict, some of which specifically address humanitarian concerns. Resolution 2139 (2014) called for an end to the use of barrel bombs and the lifting of sieges to allow humanitarian access. Resolution 2165 (2014) established a mechanism for cross-border humanitarian aid deliveries, allowing UN agencies and their partners to reach people in need in areas that were difficult to access.

2. Humanitarian Response Plans:

The UN, through its Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), has consistently launched humanitarian response plans to address the needs of those affected by the crisis. These plans outline the required funding and detail the humanitarian activities to be carried out by UN agencies and their partners. These plans are crucial for mobilizing resources and coordinating international efforts to alleviate suffering.

3. Syria Humanitarian Assistance Conferences:

The UN, in collaboration with other international partners, has organized several Syria Humanitarian Assistance Conferences to mobilize financial support for humanitarian efforts. These conferences serve as platforms for donor countries to pledge funds to address the urgent needs of the Syrian people. The conferences emphasize the importance of sustained and predictable funding for humanitarian operations.

4. Syria Humanitarian Response Forums:

The UN regularly convenes Humanitarian Response Forums (HRFs) to bring together humanitarian actors, including UN agencies, NGOs, and donors, to discuss the evolving situation in Syria. These forums provide an opportunity for coordination, information-sharing, and strategic planning to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance.

5. Joint UN and NGO Appeals:

The UN, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), has issued joint appeals for humanitarian assistance in Syria. These appeals outline the urgent needs, funding requirements, and the specific actions that the international community should take to address the humanitarian crisis. The appeals aim to generate financial support and foster a collective response to the evolving situation.

6. Syria Cross-Border Humanitarian Assistance:

The UN has facilitated cross-border humanitarian assistance to reach people in need in Syria, especially in areas where access is limited due to security concerns. Cross-border operations have been authorized by the UN Security Council to ensure the delivery of aid, including food, medicine, and other essential supplies, to those in hard-to-reach areas.

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