



BaLMUN 2021

Topic Guide

Historical Crisis Committee

CHAIR LETTER

Dear delegates,

It is our great honor to wish a warm welcome to all the delegates attending BaLMUN this year. BaLMUN is a Model United Nations hosted annually by Gimnazija Banja Luka. Due to the current situation with the global pandemic, we are sorry that you will not be able to get to know Banja Luka, the city with a lot of hospitality, beauty and memorable features. However, we hope that we will all do our best to protect our health and the welfare of our loved ones. While fighting for the future from your homes, we sincerely hope that by attending our MUN conference you will be able to develop and improve your research, debating and problem solving skills. We also hope that the debate will be constructive and exciting, that it will result in successful resolutions and also in an unforgettable experience for all the delegates. We are looking forward to meeting you all!

Best regards

Your chairs, Andjela Nedic and

DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Historical Crisis Committee is one of particularly dynamic nature, in which Delegates are situated in a state of war, and expected to issue specific war methods in regards to the crisis at hand. Besides the Chair and Co-Chair, the Crisis Committee features a Crisis Director, along with a Crisis Team, whose purpose is to analyze the submitted directives, and determine whether or not they will be included in future crisis updates. Deviating somewhat from the classical format of the United Nations, the Crisis Committee is an opportunity to fully understand diplomatic strategies exhibited in times of war, when countries are supposed to act quickly, determinedly, and rationally.

This year's topic on the Historical Crisis Committee is:

The Manchurian Crisis

INTRODUCTION

The Manchurian Crisis 1931-1933 followed the Mukden Incident in which Japanese rail tracks were destroyed in an explosion. Claiming that it was saboteurs, the Japanese responded with force, taking control of the Chinese province of Manchuria. The issue was investigated by the League of Nations which found Japan to be at fault. The Japanese ignored the League of Nations and left the organisation. The province was not returned to Chinese rule until the end of the Second World War.

After the Wall Street Crash, the US government introduced tariffs to protect her industry from Japanese competition. The tariffs had a huge impact of Japanese industry and led to high unemployment. As the economic situation got worse army leaders voiced their opinion that the only way in which Japan could solve its economic problems and show that it was still a strong nation was through expansion. The Japanese already had a colony on the Asian mainland and were highly influential in several areas, particularly a Chinese province called Manchuria.

Manchuria was the source of much of Japans imported raw materials such as coal and iron ore. In September 1931 the Japanese owned railroad from Manchuria to the coast was vandalised at Mukden.



Freeze Date: 1 March 1933

The Mukden Incident and the Invasion of Manchuria

The Japanese Imperial Army had the permission of the Japanese government to launch retaliatory actions if the Chinese attacked any Japanese property in the area. As a result, Japanese troops responded to the explosion at Mukden by attacking the nearby Chinese Garrison, taking and securing it with ease as the Chinese government had ordered troops in the area not to resist any attacks by Japanese troops in this area.

The Incident was a masterstroke by Japanese officers determined to begin the process of territorial expansion. The explosion at Mukden was very probably staged by Japanese troops to enable a retaliatory attack. Following the seizure of Mukden Japanese troops began occupying other towns and cities in the area. Within 5 months the whole of Manchuria was under the control of the Japanese army.



The Chinese Response to the Invasion of Manchuria

The policy of the Chinese Government at the time of the Mukden Incident was one of non-resistance towards Japanese troops in this area. This was primarily because they wanted to concentrate their efforts on defeating Communism in China and securing a strong and stable government. As a consequence the small Japanese force of some 11,000 men were able to take control of much of Manchuria very easily, despite the presence of a quarter of a million Chinese troops in the area.

In order to try and retain control of Manchuria the Chinese appealed to the League of Nations. In October the League of Nations passed a resolution saying that Japanese troops should withdraw and established a commission which would investigate the claims of both sides. The Japanese rejected the League of Nations resolution and insisted on direct negotiations with the Chinese Government. These negotiations failed and the Japanese proceeded, now against some resistance, to take control of the remainder of Manchuria. They then proceeded to launch an attack on the Chinese city of Shanghai which was outside of the area of Japanese economic control.

The League of Nations response to the Manchurian Crisis

The initial response of the League of Nations was to follow its pre-arranged process for arbitration. They listened to the complaints of the Chinese and the Japanese position and then the Council, minus the representatives of China and Japan, discussed the issue before coming up with a Resolution. In this case the resolution called for Japanese withdrawal from Manchuria whilst a Commission investigated the issue.

The Japanese ignored the wishes of the League of Nations and continued to expand whilst negotiations and diplomatic efforts to solve the crisis continued.

When the commission produced its report on Manchuria in October 1932 it stated that Japan should leave Manchuria. A Special Assembly of the League of Nations was then held to vote on the issue in February 1933. When the vote reiterated that Japan should leave Manchuria, the Japanese delegation simply walked out of the League of Nations, never to return.

What happened next?

According to the League of Nations rules the failure of Japan to comply with a resolution should have been followed by economic sanctions and / or collectivemilitary action to enforce the resolution. The League in this case however, did neither. Countries could not agree on what economic sanctions should be imposed and the major powers of Britain and France were unwilling to risk their armed forces in a conflict on the other side of the world. Moreover, such action may have placed British and French Colonies in the Far East at risk of attack.

Questions to consider:

- Without the membership of either the US or Soviet Russia, how should the League of Nations prevent Japan from further expansion at the expense of China?
- Which actions should the League take in order to stop the encouraging effect of Manchuria for both Italy and Germany?

USEFUL LINKS:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/japan_quest_empire_01.shtml

https://ww2db.com/battle_spec.php?battle_id=18

<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/mukden-incident>

<https://rgshistory.com/the-manchurian-crisis-1931-33/>