



**UoBDMUN**

PER AD ARDUA ALTA

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Background guide  
Historical Security Council (HSC)  
UoBDMUN - 2025

## Welcome Letter

Dear delegates,

We are thrilled to welcome you to the Historical Security Council (HSC) at the University of Birmingham Dubai Model United Nations!

As the chairs of this committee, we would like to extend our warmest greetings to all of the delegates of this committee and the excitement that lies ahead!

The HSC offers an opportunity to dive into our diplomatic past, explore what shaped our current political landscape, and what we can learn from the past to use in the future.

As the chairs of this committee, our top priority is ensuring every delegate leaves the committee room having learned something new! This is why we will be focused on guaranteeing insightful and fruitful debates throughout the conference while also promoting collaboration to reach the resolution of the set topic!

In this Background guide, you will find the agenda set for this topic and all the tools you will need to tackle it whether that is the required resource links or the driving questions that impact your perception of this topic. Maintaining global relations and diplomatic pathways is a crucial aspect of ensuring world peace. Your journey throughout UoBDMUN will include analysis of past threats, debating policies, and building consensus to address vital concerns regarding past actions. Moreover, this background guide will outline all committee rules and procedures to ensure that we all have fruitful and respectful debates.

As the chairs of the committee, our role is to facilitate all discussions, help delegates whenever needed, and answer any questions and concerns. While we can help every delegate it is your passion, drive, and creativity that will ensure this committee's success.

Finally, we hope this background guide can be used as a valuable tool and resource in your journey, but always remember that each delegate must have their unique perspective and back whatever they think is right!

## Committee Introduction

The Historic Security Council (HSC) in Model United Nations (MUN) is a unique committee that focuses on addressing pivotal historical events as if they were happening in real time. It allows delegates to delve into the past, representing countries or figures involved in significant global crises. The primary goal of the HSC is to recreate the dynamics of the United Nations Security Council during a specific historical period, offering a chance to analyze and address complex issues within their original context.

Delegates in the HSC are tasked with debating and resolving historical crises, ranging from international conflicts and political upheavals to major wars and peace negotiations. The committee requires participants to thoroughly research the historical period, including the geopolitical, economic, and social conditions of the time. Delegates must also adhere to their assigned roles, representing the policies and interests of their nations or figures accurately.

A defining aspect of the HSC is its unpredictability.

As events unfold, new crises can emerge based on the actions and decisions made within the committee. This demands quick thinking, adaptability, and a strong understanding of the historical background. Delegates are encouraged to collaborate, negotiate, and strategize to find solutions while navigating the unique challenges of historical diplomacy.

The HSC provides a platform for developing skills in research, public speaking, and critical thinking. It pushes delegates to think deeply about how decisions made in the past influenced global events and shaped the modern world.

By revisiting history, the committee allows participants to gain valuable insights into international relations, leadership, and decision-making, making it an integral part of the MUN experience.

## Topic Introduction

The Cuban Missile Crisis was a 13 day skirmish between Russia and the United States during the cold war. Starting due to the deployment of a nuclear missile in Cuba, the CMC nearly brought the world to a full nuclear conflict and is considered one of the most dangerous events of the Cold War.

The crisis did not only show the increasing tensions between the 2 global superpowers but also showed the globe how fragile international peace can be when in the presence of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

To understand the root cause of this crisis it is important to understand the broader context behind it. By the mid 1960's Tensions between the USA and Russia were at an all time high. As the Cold War grew larger it polarized the world into 2 different blocs. The USA had its NATO allies assisting in its war while Russia simultaneously had its own allies with the Warsaw pact. In 1959 the Cuban Revolution occurred and a new president was appointed, Fidel Castro. With Castro's political views aligning with Russia the Cuban Revolution was the tool that made the CMC possible.

In July of 1962 president Khrushchev believed that a US invasion on Cuba was imminent and with the deployment of US missiles in Turkey the Russians needed a leverage point to turn the tide to their favor. On September 9th 1962 the first soviet Medium Range Ballistic Missile arrived to Cuba. The plantation of the bomb was more than just a threat to the USA, it served as a connection between Cuba and Russia as Russia used this newly formed diplomatic relationship to protect Cuba from the US and allow it to develop its people as it pleases while also addressing Cuba's possible political alliance with China.

Although the CMC nearly brought on a global nuclear conflict, it is also important to understand that because of it diplomatic relations between Russia and the USA. Further more international diplomatic relations between all nuclear countries improved as the CMC was used as an example of what could happen if a lack of communication were to occur.

## Topic History

After World-War II ended an international vacuum of power was created and with both global superpowers profiting from the war an atmosphere of mistrust was created between them leading to both countries wanting complete world control and with that came the creation of the Cold War, A geopolitical, Ideological, and military race between the two countries.

As the war between the two countries developed, an arms race was born and communism started spreading across multiple parts of the globe such as the Middle East and Asia. This pressure on the USA combined with the well timed Cuban revolution that overthrew the USA backed dictator Fulgencio Batista and appointing Fedil Castro meaning that the USA had lost its grip on Cuba.

Although Fedil Castro was not politically aligned with the Russians. The Economic and diplomatic sanctions that were imposed on Cuba by the USA lead to Castro seeking Russian assistance to fight the punishments of the USA. Ultimately the USA decided to launch a covert operation called the Bay of Pigs invasion to overthrow the Cuban government and restoring the US's grip on Cuba. The CIA began training and arming Cuban exiles to perform this operation however the operation ended up failing with Castro being unharmed and all of the Cuban exiles being either captured or killed. This event marked a turning point for Castro and convinced him to cooperate with the Russians as a form of immunity against the United States.

Simultaneously, the global arms race added another layer of tension. By the early 1960s, both the United States and the Soviet Union had developed vast nuclear arsenals, but there were strategic imbalances. The U.S. had stationed nuclear missiles in Turkey and Italy, capable of striking Soviet territory. Khrushchev viewed these deployments as provocative and sought to redress the imbalance by placing Soviet missiles in Cuba. This move would not only protect Cuba but also give the Soviet Union a strategic advantage in the Western Hemisphere.

The international context of the Cold War further exacerbated tensions. Proxy wars, espionage, and ideological competition defined the period, with each superpower striving to expand its influence. In this environment, Cuba became a flashpoint, symbolizing the broader struggle between capitalism and communism. The Soviet decision to place missiles in Cuba was informed not only by strategic calculations but also by Khrushchev's desire to demonstrate Soviet strength and resolve to the world.

Topic Analysis:

The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 was a defining moment in the Cold War, epitomizing the precarious balance of power in a nuclear-armed world. This 13-day confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union brought the globe closer to nuclear annihilation than ever before. The crisis unfolded in the context of rising Cold War tensions, ideological rivalry, and an arms race that underscored the

fragility of global security. Its resolution demonstrated the importance of diplomacy, leadership, and the ability to navigate high-stakes negotiations. Analyzing this event offers critical insights into the dynamics of international relations, crisis management, and the lessons learned to prevent future conflicts.

At the heart of the crisis was the placement of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. This act was both a strategic move by Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and a reaction to the broader Cold War environment. The United States had stationed nuclear missiles in Turkey and Italy, directly threatening Soviet territory. By deploying missiles in Cuba, Khrushchev aimed to redress this strategic imbalance, deter U.S. aggression against Cuba, and showcase Soviet strength. For Fidel Castro's Cuba, the missiles were a protective measure against U.S. attempts to overthrow his government, as evidenced by the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961. Thus, the crisis was deeply rooted in both superpowers' desire to project strength and in Cuba's need to secure its sovereignty.

The crisis escalated when American U-2 reconnaissance flights identified missile installations in Cuba, prompting an immediate response from the Kennedy administration. President John F. Kennedy faced a range of options, from military strikes to diplomatic overtures, each fraught with risk. Ultimately, he chose to impose a naval "quarantine" on Cuba—a blockade in all but name—to prevent further delivery of Soviet military equipment. This decision allowed the U.S. to take a firm stance without immediately escalating to war. The move also left room for negotiation, a critical factor in avoiding catastrophic consequences.

The ensuing standoff tested the resolve of leaders on both sides and highlighted the perils of miscalculation. Communication between Washington and Moscow was slow and fraught with misunderstandings, raising the risk of unintended escalation. Tensions peaked with incidents such as the shooting down of an American U-2 plane over Cuba, which could have triggered a military response. However, behind-the-scenes diplomacy proved decisive. Secret negotiations led to a compromise: the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw its missiles from Cuba in exchange for a U.S. commitment not to invade Cuba and a quiet agreement to remove American missiles from Turkey.

The crisis underscored the dangers of brinkmanship in a nuclear-armed world. It revealed the necessity of open communication channels, such as the hotline established between Washington and Moscow after the crisis, to manage future conflicts. It also highlighted the importance of measured decision-making and the avoidance of zero-sum thinking in international relations.

In the decades since, the Cuban Missile Crisis has served as a case study in effective crisis management. It demonstrated the catastrophic potential of nuclear weapons and the importance of diplomacy in resolving conflicts. By navigating the brink of war, world leaders learned valuable lessons about restraint, negotiation, and the shared responsibility of maintaining global peace.

## **Driving Questions:**

1. How can the international community establish mechanisms to prevent the deployment of offensive weapons in politically volatile regions, while respecting the sovereignty of nations?
2. What steps can be taken to improve communication channels between conflicting parties to reduce the risk of miscalculation and ensure transparency during crises?
3. What role should global institutions, such as the United Nations, play in mediating disputes involving superpowers and smaller nations to ensure impartiality and effective conflict resolution?
4. How can the international community work collaboratively to regulate and monitor the proliferation of nuclear weapons, while addressing the security concerns of both nuclear and non-nuclear states?
5. What strategies can be employed to address the underlying political, economic, and ideological tensions that contribute to such crises, ensuring long-term stability and peace?



## Starting Resources

Here are 5 links in Harvard Citation format, ensuring they end with .org or .edu domains:

1. National Archives. (2024) 'Cuban Missile Crisis', National Archives. Available at: <https://www.archives.gov/news/topics/cuban-missile-crisis>
2. Wilson Center Digital Archive. (n.d.) 'Cuban Missile Crisis', Wilson Center. Available at: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/topics/cuban-missile-crisis>
3. JFK Library. (2018) 'Cuban Missile Crisis', John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. Available at: <https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/jfk-in-history/cuban-missile-crisis>
4. Department of State Office of the Historian. (n.d.) 'The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962', U.S. Department of State. Available at: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis>
5. Harvard Kennedy School. (2012) 'The Cuban Missile Crisis at 50', Harvard Kennedy School. Available at: <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/publications/cuban-missile-crisis-50>

## Works Cited

1. Arms Control Association (2002) 'The Cuban Missile Crisis', Arms Control Today, November. Available at: <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2002-11/features/cuban-missile-crisis>
2. Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum (n.d.) 'The Cuban Missile Crisis', Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. Available at: <https://airandspace.si.edu/stories/editorial/cuban-missile-crisis>
3. Mastny, V. (2022) 'Eastern Europe and the Cuba Missile Crisis: A Soviet Empire Retreats Back', Wilson Center, 13 October. Available at: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/eastern-europe-and-cuba-missile-crisis-soviet-empire-retreats-back>
4. Office of the Historian (n.d.) 'The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962', U.S. Department of State. Available at: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis>