

TBMUN'20



UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL STUDY GUIDE

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
1. Agenda Item: The War in Donbass	2
1.1. Introduction:	2
1.2. The First Protests:	2
1.3. The Conflict Spreads:	2
2. Rules of Procedure of the UNSC:	5
2.1. Members of the UNSC	5
2.2. UNSC Procedure Regarding Motions:	6
a. Motion to Declare a State as Party to the Dispute.....	6
b. Motion for a “Question and Answer” Period	6
c. Motion to Conduct Business in Closed Session	6
d. Conducting Business in Public Session	7
e. Motion to Declare the Vote Substantial.....	7
2.3. Voting Procedure:	7
a. The Veto Question:.....	7
b. Voting on Resolutions:	7
c. Voting on Amendments:	7
Bibliography	8

1. Agenda Item: The War in Donbass

1.1. Introduction:

The War in Donbass is a military conflict raging on since April of 2014. The main area of the conflict is the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (province) of eastern Ukraine, colloquially known as Donbass. The conflict started with anti-ukrainian protests in the city that escalated into a pro-russian separatist movement. These protests came following the annexation of Crimea by Russia in February-March 2014. Following the protests, Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic was declared, prompting military intervention by the Ukrainian government. Since the start of conflict 5 years ago, there has been 20 different ceasefires, hoping to de-escalate and stop the violence, however none of them were successful in maintaining peace. The most recent ceasefire, which came to effect in 8th of March 2019, has led to a significant de-escalation and all belligerents agreed on a roadmap to establishing peace in the area recognized by the OSCE.

1.2. The First Protests:

On 6th of April, between 1000 to 2000 protesters gathered around the government buildings in Donetsk and Luhansk. The protestors in Donetsk demanded a state referendum similar to the one done in Crimea earlier in 2014. Soon, however, the protestors stormed the Donetsk Regional State Administration (RSA) building and when their demands were not met, the activists declared the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR). In Luhansk, protestors stormed the local headquarters of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU). The police were able to retake the building but the protestors gathered outside and held a meeting, demanding federalization or secession to Russia. At this assembly Valery Bolotov was declared "People's Governor" and two referendums were scheduled, one to decide on whether the region should seek autonomy and the other one being a referendum on secession to Russia. Luhansk People's Republic was declared on 27th of April.

1.3. The Conflict Spreads:

Governmental buildings were occupied in Donetsk and with these militants were able to seize arms from the security forces of the city. By 14th of April, many cities in the oblasts were occupied with Sloviansk, Mariupol and Horlivka being the most important ones.

This aggression prompted the Ukrainian government to intervene in the region and soon conflicts between local militants and the Armed Forces of Ukraine came to being. A governmental counter-offensive was launched and there were skirmishes between local militias and government forces in the cities of Kramatorsk and Sloviansk. Districts and cities changed hands but neither side could claim a significant victory over the other.

Following the referendum of 12 May, which was not recognized by any nation including Ukraine and Russia, DPR and LPR both declared martial law. In early May, skirmishes between the government and the militias continued around strategic points around separatist areas. On 22 May, leaders of LPR and DPR met and reached an agreement to form the Novorossiya/New Russia Confederation, claiming many important cities in South-Eastern Ukraine such as Kharkiv, Odessa and Zaporizhia.

Fighting continued and the Donetsk International Airport was attacked and captured by the pro-Russian Vostok Battalion. During the fighting, there was also fighting within Luhansk between the separatists and the National Guard, with LPR coming out on top. In June, the border post of Luhansk was besieged and captured by LPR and on the 2nd, there was an airstrike by the Ukrainian Air Force to the city of Luhansk, which killed a few civilians along with the militants. By 5th of June, the town of Krasnyi Lyman and another border post in Sverdlovsk was recaptured by the Ukrainian government.

On 11th of June, three Ukrainian T-64 tanks that were captured by Russian troops earlier in the year in Crimea was sent to DPR along with other military materiel such as rocket launchers and other vehicles were given to DPR by Russia.

On 14th of June, a government IL-76 plane was shot down over Luhansk which was carrying troops and munitions. The same day, two T-72's entered Donetsk.

On June 19th, a battle erupted in the insurgent held town of Yampil, near Krasnyi Lyman which involved tanks and armoured vehicles from both sides. After the battle, Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko declared a unilateral ceasefire, which lasted around a week.

After the ceasefire was broken by insurgents, the government mounted a successful counter-offensive, capturing Sloviansk, Kramatorsk, Druzhkivka, Kostyantynivka, and Artemivsk. They also increased their aerial attacks on separatist positions.

From June to mid July, there was relative stability, however the tensions were still high. However, the eastern border towns of Ukraine were a hotspot for clashes where the government made progress along the Russian border. The heavy clashes in the region broke down the “15-point-peace” plan of the government, leaving little option for a new ceasefire.

On 19th of July, the government forces reached Donetsk and skirmishes were fought around the outskirts of the city and nearby towns were captured by the army and pro-government Donbas Battalion militia. Following this, the Ukrainian forces took Lysychansk and start storming the stronghold of Horlivka. Upon a siege, Horlivka was abandoned by the insurgents to support the city centre of Donetsk.

Following the defeats, in early August, DPR leader Igor Girkin addressed Russia and President Putin for an intervention to support their cause.

By 3rd of August, the city of Luhansk was besieged on all sides by Ukrainian forces. While the situation less dire, Donetsk was under heavy artillery fire and close to being surrounded. By the 9th, Girkin announced that Donetsk was completely encircled. Government sources claimed that $\frac{3}{4}$ of all insurgent land was reclaimed by Ukraine. However, the government forces were unable to take the cities.

In the following days, Russian forces entered Ukraine. Following this, an insurgent offensive started in late August that lasted for a few weeks and was able to push the government forces back significantly and by the early days of September, the government forces had to pull out of both Luhansk and Donetsk airports and a new ceasefire was signed.

However, this ceasefire was only on paper and numerous clashes happened around the border areas, but neither side could push the other one back, resulting in stalemates.

In January tensions rose and skirmishes around Donetsk Airport started. The airport was first captured by the government forces, again, just to be re-captured by the

insurgents, again. Certain border checkpoints also changed hands between the sides a few times, but no significant gain was achieved and a new ceasefire, named Minsk II was signed in February.

This ceasefire, albeit not entirely, was able to halt the fighting. Only minor skirmishes happened between the government and insurgents and the front became frozen and static. This bleak situation lasted until 2017.

Fighting escalated around the Avdiivka city under the control of the Ukrainian government. Many uneasy ceasefires came to effect between February and December, with some of them being broken on their first days by both sides.

In early January of 2018, the Ukrainian parliament passed a bill to regain control over separatist-owned areas, which was dubbed as a “preparation for war” by Russia. A few skirmishes broke out and a few more ceasefires were put to effect to limited results.

In October 2019, the Steinmeier Formula was proposed, which consisted of PoW exchanges and conducting plebiscites in separatist areas to assess what the local populace wanted. Following this, the separatists withdrew from certain areas. While the fighting has mostly died down, there still is no definitive peace yet.

2. Rules of Procedure of the UNSC:

2.1. Members of the UNSC

UNSC is composed of 15 member states. There are 5 permanent members of the Council, these nations being the United States of America, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Russian Federation, People’s Republic of China and French Republic. The non-permanent states for this Council in TBMUN’20 are Ukraine, Georgia, Turkey, Germany, Israel, Poland, Kazakhstan, Hungary, India and Japan.

2.2. UNSC Procedure Regarding Motions:

a. Motion to Declare a State as Party to the Dispute

A Delegate of the Security Council may propose a *Motion to Declare as Party to the Dispute* any member of the United Nations which is not a member of the Security Council or any state which is not a member of the United Nations. The delegate who suggests the motion will have to provide sufficient justification. The Chair will recognize one (1) speaker for and one (1) speaker against this motion. A state which is party to the dispute shall have the status of an observer and all the rights and obligations deriving from it. This motion requires a 9/15 majority.

b. Motion for a "Question and Answer" Period

A formal "Question and Answer" period may be instituted by the Chair, upon the request of a Council member, for the purposes of questioning the representative(s) of a country, organisation, etc. on the issue at hand. The Delegate rising to this motion shall specify a suggested total duration of the Question and Answer Period, as well as the purpose. The Question and Answer Period shall be presided and monitored by the chair and conducted by the council as a whole.

c. Motion to Conduct Business in Closed Session

This motion serves to preserve the privacy and confidentiality of the Security Council meetings. Once passed all non-members of the Security Council are required to immediately exit the room. This includes all auxiliary personnel such as journalists, observers, advisors etc. The Chairpersons and the Secretary General, as well as his/her Deputies, are not affected by this motion. The Security Council may, or may not, allow for the Administrative Staff to remain in the room. No communication with the outside world, whatsoever, is allowed. The only possible means of communication is through the Secretary General and his/her Deputies. Voting on this Motion is considered to be substantial. This motion requires a 9/15 majority.

d. Conducting Business in Public Session

After a *Motion to Conduct Business in Closed Session* has passed, the Security Council may conduct business again in Public through a *Motion to Conduct Business in Public*. This Motion requires a simple majority to pass. Voting on this Motion is considered to be substantial.

e. Motion to Declare the Vote Substantial

This is a motion which may only be used by the Permanent Members of the Security Council. It may be entertained on any procedural Motion. The aim of this motion is to change the required vote on the procedural Motion into a substantial vote, thus giving the permanent members the possibility to veto a normally procedural motion. This motion requires a 9/15 majority.

2.3. Voting Procedure:**a. The Veto Question:**

The P5 nations have the right to veto on substantial voting procedure. An against vote from a P5 nation constitutes as a veto, and will cause the vote to fail immediately. However, P5 countries must submit a rationale for the usage of veto. This rationale could be submitted either in note form or via a speech. If the chair board believes that a rationale for a veto is incorrect or irrelevant, the chair can ask for further explanation. If they do not support the subject matter but not entirely against, they may abstain.

b. Voting on Resolutions:

UNSC will follow operative clause by clause debate. After that, the house will debate on the resolution as a whole. Resolutions and clauses require a 2/3 majority to pass.

c. Voting on Amendments:

Amendments require a simple majority to pass.

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