

# Committee Guide



## *Stabilizing the Sahel Region – The Fight Against Terrorism and Climate Change*

*Security Council*





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## 1. Personal Introduction

Dear delegates of this year's Security Council,

I am delighted to welcome you to this 20th international session of the Oldenburg Model United Nations Security Council. My name is Dennis Kirsch, I am 21 years old, and currently studying International Relations in my second year in the Dutch University City of Groningen.

I have been doing MUNs since I was 13 years and visited a lot of conferences over the years. After having chaired multiple times and having served as OLMUN's President of the General Assembly in 2019, chairing this year's Security Council will be the end of my MUN career.

That's why I am even more excited to get to know all of you during our week in June. Model United Nations are a great platform to meet amazing people, exchange ideas, debate about topics that are close to our heart and grow personally. I know that some of you might be sitting for the first time in such a setting, but talking from experience I have one advice for all of you: Don't be afraid to do wrong! Enjoy our Council, take part, express your opinions, and last but not least have fun!

I am looking forward to meeting all of you very soon!

Dennis Kirsch

Dear delegates of this year's Security Council,

Welcome to the 20th session of the Oldenburg Model United Nations! I am ecstatic to chair this year's Security Council. My name is Ruqaya Zaki, I am 19 years old, and currently in my first year of my Law Bachelor. I am studying in the beautiful city of Leiden, but I have lived in Assen for many years. MUNs have been a big part of my life since I was 15 years old; I have been a delegate in two Security Councils (OLMUN and HSPMUN) as well as being the secretary general for the Assen Model United Nations. I have chaired once in the Assen Model European Parliament and have given multiple MUN workshops for delegates and chairs alike. I have met great people through these events and some have even become my friends. It's truly a fascinating experience that brings people from all over the world together. Ideologies and personalities are encouraged to mix and it always ensures fruitful debates and interesting resolutions. You will all do great, I know for sure! You'll exit OLMUN 2021 with a handful of new knowledge and experiences. So don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and go full speed ahead!

I will see you very soon!

Ruqaya Zaki



## 2. General Introduction

Honorable delegates of the Security Council,

we are glad to welcome you to our online MUN and we are looking forward to having some interesting debates. You all know that it is hard to debate when you do not have any information about the topic you are debating about. That is why we made this committee guide: to give you guidelines for your research and provide you with some general information. In order to be fully prepared we are also advising you to read the Rules of Procedure for the Security Council which can be found on the OLMUN website even though we are going to help you to understand how the OLMUN works during our time together. Another advice would be to not only do your research on your own country, but also concentrate on possible allies and supporters for the policy of your country. Furthermore, you will find links at the end of this guide that will help you to do your research.

## 3. How to Use this Guide

Even though this guide is supposed to help you to get started on your research, your research should not only consist of the information given in this guide. Try to find other information about your country's past, present, cultural factors, political structure, you name it... Another important thing to remember is that your opinion might not be similar to your country's opinion. For the sake of the debates it is necessary that you stick to your country's policy. Furthermore, we ask you to write a policy statement for your country and a draft resolution that you are supposed to send to us by the **15th of June**.

### 3.1 Policy Statement

Every delegate must prepare a policy statement. It should not be longer than five minutes and include the most important information of your country's view on the topic. The structure should be clear and it should be easy to understand. These are some questions that should be included in your policy statement and can help you to build a proper structure: What country are you representing and what is your general idea on the topic? How does your country think the problem can be solved? Which ideas do you have? What are the motivations for your country? Of course you are allowed to give examples and tell which steps your country has already taken. Remember: Your goal is to convince other nations to cooperate with you and to give everyone an idea on your country's opinion. In the end, you can add a frame with a formal beginning and ending. You can find many examples of policy statements on the internet, but most importantly it should simply answer the questions above. A policy statement's

structure is not as strict as one from a draft resolution, so don't worry much about the exact format.

### 3.2 Draft Resolution

The resolution is the most important part of our committee work. As the draft resolutions you prepare prior to the conference by yourselves will be the main basis of our work in the Security Council, we expect you to already put some work into them beforehand. If you don't have much experience with writing your own resolution, you can find some examples at [olmun.org](https://www.olmun.org) (<https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/Archiv/>). In the OLMUN handbook there are helpful phrases for the resolutions that can help you get an idea of how to write one on our topic. As we'd like to make sure everyone is well prepared for our committee work, we ask you to send us your draft resolution by **June 15th**. This way we can also give you some feedback that can help you in your final preparations. We'd like to see at least one page from everyone, this way the lobbying process will be way more interesting for all of you!

## 4. Introduction to the Security Council

The Security Council is the most important part of the United Nations. It consists of 15 members, five of them are permanent member states. Those are France, Russia, Great Britain, the People's Republic of China and the United States of America. The others are elected for a two years term by the General Assembly. For 2021 those countries are: Estonia, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Niger, Norway, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Tunisia, and Viet Nam. In June, Estonia will have the Presidency. The permanent members have special rights in the council such as the right to veto important resolutions or decisions. The Security Council has the power to create international sanctions, establish and legitimize military operations for peacekeeping and it is the only organ of the UN with the ability to pass internationally binding resolutions. This makes it the most powerful organ of the United Nations. Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter established the powers of the Security Council and is its governing law. We advise you to take a look at this important document to know the competences invested in the Security Council. Be aware that there are separate Rules of Procedure for the Security Council.

## 5. Introduction to the Topic

The Greek philosopher Aristotle once said, "*Poverty is the parent of crime and revolution.*"; nothing is less true when this quote is applied to the Sahel conflict. Poor and ungoverned pieces of land in the Sahel are exploited by Islamic extremist groups, such as Boko Haram, Al Qaeda and ISIS, in order to cause fear

and instability all over the region. This form of threatening has been proven effective as the extremist groups are gaining more and more power.

The tensions in the Sahel region—mainly in Niger, Nigeria Mauritania, Chad, Mali and Burkina Faso—have reached new heights as the murder of Chad’s president, Idriss Déby, occurred on the battlefield. He died in 2019 while fighting the rebels who tried to overthrow Chad’s government. Islamic extremist groups continue to rebel and attempt to overthrow the governments of their hunger for power and control.

The Sahel region does not only face terrorism issues, but extreme climate change as well. The positioning of the Sahel ensures for extreme and unpredictable weather changes. This does not only mean that their climate change pace goes much harder than other parts of the world, but it also means that millions of lives are in danger. The food security is extremely low and the living conditions are almost unbearable. Farmers in the Sahel region are working under high pressure and are dependent for matters between life and death. This ties in strongly with the terrorism that occurs in the Sahel region. These awful circumstances have triggered a tragic humanitarian crisis at which millions of lives are at stake.

## 5.1 Terrorism

It all started in 2012: with the regime shift in Libya and the uprising of extremist rebel groups in the north of Mali. Pieces of land which are abandoned by the government are an open playground for Islamic extremist groups such as Al Qaeda, ISIS and Boko Haram. These



groups see a piece of land which is ungoverned and promises the citizens located there a fruitful life. In exchange for food, water and protection, they recruit poor people to join their side. Their army multiplies quite easily that way. Targeting vulnerable poor people in exchange for essential life needs is the oldest trick in the book, but unfortunately it works. These Jihadist groups also take great advantage of the ethnic differences of the various countries. Since 2015 there has been a high increase of intercommunal violence in Mali between different ethnic groups. So, this conflict is branching out and causing, in itself,

several other conflicts between smaller groups. The terrorist groups continue to spread around Mali, Niger, Chad and Mauritania. These countries are collectively most referred to as G5 Sahel. This is a framework with a goal to cooperate and aid in militant attacks and strategies against the terrorist groups.

Their goal? Spread their extremist version of the Islam and take over the governments of these African countries with violence and rebellion. Their armies are fully loaded with weapons and bombs. This way, they ensure to be taken seriously. French and American backed armies are trying to stabilize the situation, but airstrikes and bombing alone does not resolve the situation at all. However, the violent actions of the terrorist groups have caused many people to flee their homes. In Mali alone, a country with 18.6 million citizens, 335,000 people as of 2018 are forced to flee for their lives. People from Mali and from the other countries in the Sahel alike are fleeing for life towards Europe. This results in huge streams of refugees, an influx that overwhelms the European countries as well as puts the life of African immigrants in danger and further instability. To top it all off, the COVID-19 pandemic has quickly escalated everything even further. Like an enhanced greenhouse effect, the instability in the Sahel region has increased due to the lack of accessibility to medicine and effective ways to fight the virus.



## 5.2 Climate Change

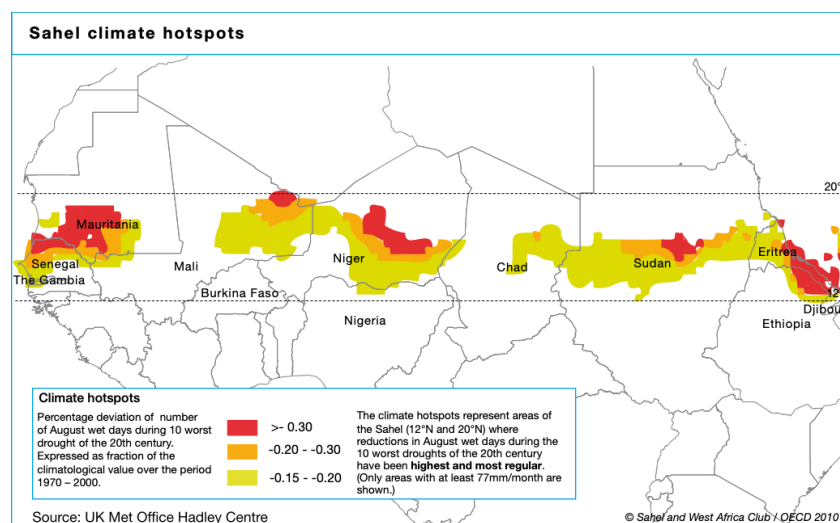
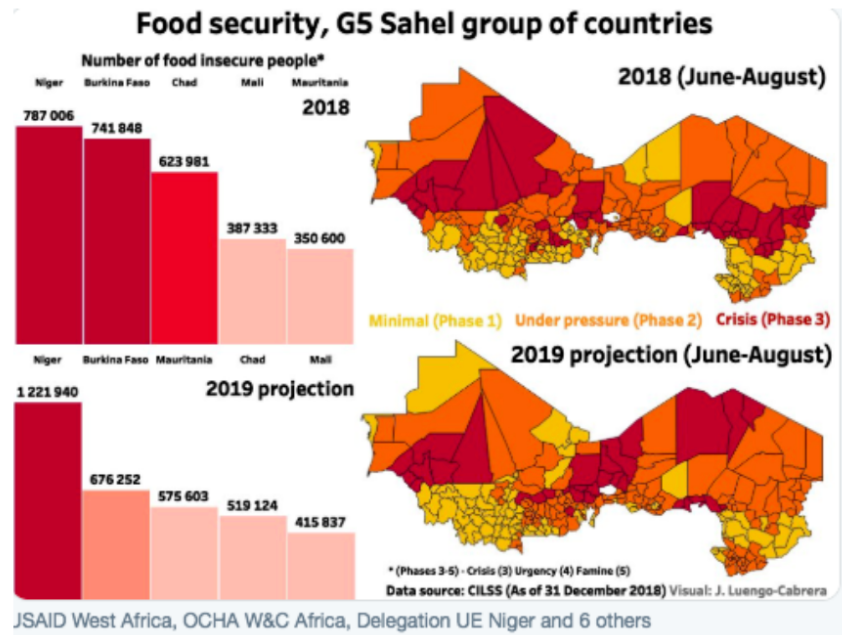
The Sahel Region is among the areas of our globe that is hit most by climate change. This not only threatens the natural state of the region, but also has drastic security implications for the Sahel. Over the last years droughts and

floods have dramatically increased in their intensity from Mauritania to Chad. The average temperatures rise 1.5 times faster than in the rest of the world and this change in temperatures causes heavy rains in wet periods. Current estimations predict the average temperature to be 3 to 5°C hotter by 2050. The result of this change in climate is

that the region's natural resources are depleting, and land is deteriorating. Two thirds of the area's population is reliant on agriculture for their own survival. Crops are destroyed and livestock dies of thirst.

As resources are becoming scarce, conflicts between farmers and herders grow. Herders were hosted by farmers in dry periods in the past and their cattle fertilized the farmer's fields. Although conflicts were present already then, local leaders managed to mediate in the majority of cases. Due to climate change these customs crumble and nowadays thousands are killed in the Sahel as a result of inter-communal war. Additionally, poverty grows and ethnic violence will surge. This not only threatens the livelihoods of farmers, but also the food security of the entire population of the Sahel. People move from rural to urban areas to escape reliance on subsistence farming, which puts critical strains on

the drink water supplies. As temperatures continue to rise and urban centers cannot sustain the growing population, more and more people are likely to seek more modest climates in the Global





North. Climate refugees are facing a life-threatening journey through the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea.

The issues of climate change and terrorism in the Sahel are related. The changing climate not only caused conflicts between the local populations, but also creates a power vacuum to be filled by terrorism groups. Populations involved in communal conflicts are prone to be radicalized by Islamist groups fueling the conflict in the Sahel region further. One has however to be careful to claim that climate change is the cause of violence. It functions as a conflict multiplier in already conflict-prone regions, such as the Sahel.

## 6. Main Questions to be Tackled

In our debate we will focus on the following questions. Please keep them in mind when writing your Policy Statement and Draft Resolution, as well as for our debate.

1. How can the scarcity of resources resulting from climate change be tackled?
2. How can climate policy be implemented into the security policies of the Council?
3. How can we ensure that people don't have to leave their native homes and resources are distributed justly?
4. What are effective approaches to humanitarian aid in the Sahel?
5. How can we ensure the lessening of internal and intercommunal violence?
6. How can we decrease the gripping control of the terrorist groups?

## 7. Further Research

This Guide only presents an overview of our topic and indicates major trends. We highly recommend you to deepen your own research. Following links are giving an indication of further research that you should conduct yourself.

### **Terrorism:**

<https://reliefweb.int/report/chad/death-chad-s-president-could-worsen-security-situation-west-africa>



<https://www.clingendael.org/publication/fight-against-terrorism-sahel-revisited>

<https://drc.ngo/it-matters/current-affairs/2020/11/central-sahel-crisis/>

[https://www.ict.org.il/Article/2666/The\\_Boiling\\_Sahel#gsc.tab=0](https://www.ict.org.il/Article/2666/The_Boiling_Sahel#gsc.tab=0)

<https://www.nrc.no/shorthand/fr/sahel---the-worlds-most-neglected-and-conflict-ridden-region/index.html>

<https://www.cer.eu/publications/archive/policy-brief/2021/sahel-europes-for-ever-war>

<https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2021/02/17/frances-for-ever-war-in-the-sahel>

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sahel/war-sahel>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/29/world/africa/france-sahel-west-africa.html>

### **Climate change:**

<https://reliefweb.int/report/chad/sahel-midst-climate-change>

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sahel/b154-le-sahel-central-theatre-des-nouvelles-guerres-climatiques>

<https://www.oecd.org/swac/publications/47234320.pdf>

<https://climate.org/risk-and-resilience-climate-change-and-instability-in-the-sahel/>

<https://www.climatecentre.org/news/1066/un-sahel-region-one-of-the-most-vulnerable-to-climate-change>

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2020/09/21/where-climate-change-is-reality-supporting-africas-sahel-pastoralists-secure-a-resilient-future>

<https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/sahel-climate-conflicts-when-fighting-climate-change-fuels-terrorism>

<https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/publications/2019/02/05/climate-change-profiles/West+African+Sahel.pdf>

<https://qz.com/africa/1719442/west-africas-sahel-vulnerable-to-climate-change-bad-governance/>

<https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/unowas-west-africa-and-the-sahel/>

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/05/1092202>

<https://dppa.un.org/en/sahel>

### **Videos (general overview of the topic):**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2qvha4CipY&ab\\_channel=Vox](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2qvha4CipY&ab_channel=Vox)

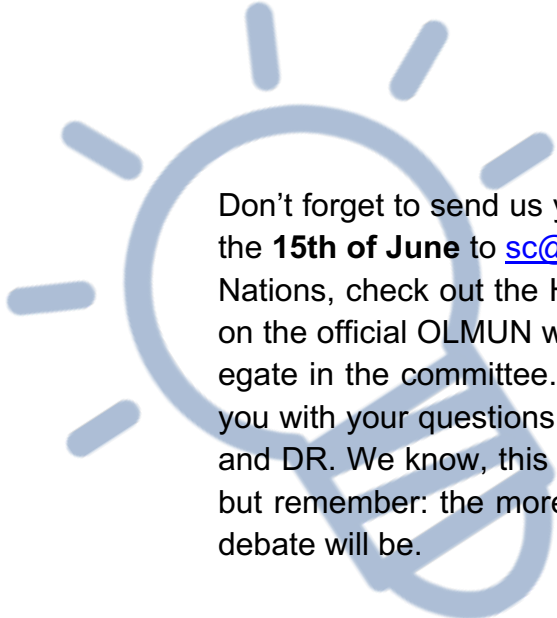
<https://youtu.be/ZNHTCTD29T8>

<https://youtu.be/4L9VxCg-VQ>

<https://youtu.be/bwhkjlUxEIs>

## **8. What Should I Do Next?**

First and foremost: **START EARLY**. The earlier you will begin your research, the better the results will be. The knowledge we provide to you with this Committee Guide will not be enough and individual research is indispensable. If you want to inform yourself adequately and participate in the debate properly, we recommend starting your examination on the crisis in the Sahel Region out of your country's perspective as early as possible. This includes using a variety of sources for your research to get a comprehensive understanding. You might want to check out the links, which we included in this Committee Guide to get a hold on what has been done on a global level concerning the topic. Nevertheless, make sure to use diverse information to back up your knowledge. Subsequently, we just want to quickly remind you to ensure that whatever your personal opinion on the issue is: you are expected to present your country's position on the topic, no matter how problematic it is. Model United Nations are a certain form of a play and the more convincing you portray your delegation, the more fun we will have.



Don't forget to send us your Draft Resolutions and your Policy Statement until the **15th of June** to [sc@olmun.org](mailto:sc@olmun.org). In general, if you are new to Model United Nations, check out the Handbook and Rules of Procedure, both can be found on the official OLMUN website and ensure that you are the best-prepared delegate in the committee. If that does not suffice, we are always happy to help you with your questions concerning the conference and the writing of your PS and DR. We know, this might all seem a little overwhelming and over-the-top, but remember: the more serious you take your preparation, the more fun the debate will be.

See you all in June,  
Ruqaya and Dennis