



European Union: Turkey's Weaponization of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, 2020

Tufts University Model United Nations Conference VIII



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LETTER FROM THE CRISIS DIRECTOR

Dear Delegates,

Greetings! Welcome to this year's Ad Hoc crisis committee. My name is Annie Rubinson, and I'm a Tufts senior from Irvington, NY, majoring in International Relations. This is my seventh year participating in Model United Nations and my fourth year serving as a TUMUN Crisis Director. I could not be more excited to welcome you all to campus in just a few weeks!

In our committee, we (the European Union) will be discussing Turkey's Weaponization of the Syrian Refugee Crisis (2020). Weaponized migration is a highly effective, albeit widely misunderstood, tool of coercion in foreign policy—and by the end of our sessions together, I hope you all have developed an immense appreciation for its pervasiveness and complexity.

Although this is technically a historical committee, the events that we will be simulating could easily have unfolded in drastically different ways than they did in real life—so regardless of what decisions you choose to make in your roles, I can guarantee that our weekend will still be filled with lots of fun twists and turns. Creativity is always encouraged. *With that in mind, please also note that the crisis staff will not be introducing COVID-19 into the committee arc (despite the fact that in reality, COVID-19 actually played a key role in the resolution of the issue we are discussing).*

In the following few sections, you will find all of the information necessary to your success at TUMUN VIII—including an overview of our committee topic, as well as a brief description of each country's position on the matter. You will also find our committee procedure rules, our technology policy, as well as some action items. Be sure to review everything carefully, and reach out to me or a member of our secretariat if you have any questions or concerns.

The MUN conferences I attended as a delegate were some of the major highlights of my own high school years, and I hope to help create a similar experience for each of you at TUMUN VIII. Please don't hesitate to email me with any questions you may have, committee-related or otherwise, especially if you are new to crisis or even a first-time MUN delegate. I look forward to meeting you all soon!

Annie Rubinson

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Introduction

The **European Union (EU)** prides itself on its commitment to promoting peace, justice, and individual liberties—but when one country’s own stability is jeopardized, just how practical are these promises?

When it comes to immigration issues, liberal governments face a dual obligation to both the incoming migrants (who in many cases have been involuntarily displaced) as well as their own citizens. This balance is essential to the EU’s credibility as a liberal institution, as well as the decision-making individual’s ability to remain in office following the next election. Fully aware of this inherent conundrum, a growing number of (authoritarian) states have co-opted migration movements as a means of exploiting this vulnerability.

Since 2012, Turkey has threatened to flood Europe with Syrian refugees on more than five occasions. Turkish President **Recep Tayyip Erdogan** (ehr-doh-wahn) offered to curb these strategically engineered outflows in

each of these instances, in exchange for various political, economic, and military concessions—and more than half of the time, he was at least partially successful.

Our committee will be set in February 2020, when Ankara began actively luring Syrian refugees across its Western border. This was carried out as a punishment to the EU, for condemning Turkey’s offensive in northern Syria—an operation which, according to Erdogan, was primarily aimed at stopping the outflow of Syrian refugees at the source. Delegates will be representing various EU states, each of which has unique policies towards refugees— not to mention, a drastically different population to cater to. How will they appease Erdogan, without compromising the integrity of both their leadership and the EU itself?

The Syrian Civil War

In 2010, a series of pro-democracy uprisings erupted across the Arab World, in a movement that later became known as the **Arab Spring**. In Syria,



"Violent Clashes Reported as Thousands Protest in Syria." The New York Times.

such activities reached a boiling point in the early months of 2011, when soldiers fired at peaceful protestors under the instruction of oppressive president Bashar al-Assad. Penalties for anti-government behavior became increasingly brutal over the following months, but protests only expanded in response.¹

Following several months of rising tensions, Syria descended into a full-scale civil war.² Tens of thousands of Syrian civilians were subsequently displaced, and the neighboring government of Turkey implemented an

¹ Zachary Laub, "Syria's Civil War: The Descent Into Horror," Council on Foreign Relations, February 14, 2023, <https://www.cfr.org/article/syrias-civil-war>.

² Mona Yacoubian, "Syria Timeline: Since the Uprising Against Assad," United States Institute of Peace, January 1, 2021, <https://www.usip.org/syria-timeline-uprising-against-assad>.

open-door policy towards these refugees fleeing violence.

By August 2012, Ankara had assumed responsibility for roughly 80,000 Syrians. This far surpassed the number of people accepted by any of the other receiving states impacted by the Syrian refugee crisis—and with no end in sight to the conflict from which these civilians were fleeing, Erdogan became increasingly desperate to compel other states to share the burden.³

Turkey Weaponizes Refugees

In the days leading up to a U.N. Security Council meeting on this matter—and as intensified fighting in Syria threatened to send an additional 50,000 refugees Turkey's way—Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu stated that the refugee crisis was "growing so out of proportion that Turkey finds it increasingly difficult to cope with the ensuing challenges all by

³ Tulay Karadeniz, "Turkey says world must share Syrian refugee burden," Reuters, August 27, 2012, <https://www.reuters.com/article/syria-crisis-turkey-refugees-idCNL5E8JRJHM20120827/>.

itself,” and that Turkey may even “run out of space” if the size of the influx exceeded 100,000 people (as was projected).⁴

In light of the fact that Turkey now hosts over 3.5 million Syrian refugees, it is easy to tell in hindsight that Ankara was likely exaggerating these figures.⁵ But even if Davutoglu was speaking truthfully, or at least believed he was, his 2012 statement contains a veiled threat nonetheless: either provide with the aid that Turkey (claims to) require to continue their open-door policy, or prepare for a crisis along your borders.

Ultimately, the Security Council did not pass an official resolution on this matter. Similarly, the Council did not agree to help establish refugee camps inside Syria. However, France and Britain did agree to add €5 million (\$6.27 million) and £3 million (\$4.7 million) respectively to their existing humanitarian contributions to

Turkey—which, Turkey had previously criticized as under-fulfilled.⁶ These numbers represented a minuscule proportion of what the Turkish government sought—simultaneously, however, the transaction confirmed to Erdogan that refugees are a highly effective bargaining chip to be weaponized against Western democracies.

Repeated Offenses

Throughout the rest of 2010s, Erdogan employed migrants as political weapons three more times. In 2014, Turkey’s Syrian refugee population surpassed 200,000—more than double what Duvatoglu had previously claimed was Turkey’s maximum capacity. Hundreds of thousands of others were also estimated to be living outside of official protection centers.⁷ On top of financial aid, Ankara also called for NATO to

⁴ “Security Council, Meeting on Situation in Syria, Shifts Focus to Plight of Externally, Internally Displaced Persons” United Nations, accessed April 21, 2022.

⁵ “Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Turkey,” UNHCR, <https://www.unhcr.org/tr/en/refugees-and-asylum-seekers-in-turkey>.

⁶ “Turkey Asks UN for Refugee Camps inside Syria,” France 24 (France 24, August 31, 2012), <https://www.france24.com/en/20120830-syria-turkey-calls-refugee-camps-un-safe-zones-camps>.

⁷ “Resolute Support Mission - NATO,” accessed May 19, 2022, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_12/2016-12-RSM-PIacemat.pdf.

impose a no-fly zone into Syria in order to curb the outflow of refugees, as well as establish a buffer zone in which refugees could be resettled.⁸

When pitching this idea, Foreign Minister Davutoglu framed it as a direct means of limiting Syrian refugee passage into Europe, thus quelling EU member states' concerns. However, it is also possible that Erdogan merely sought to steal away a territory that was presently controlled by Syria's **People's Protection Units (YPG)**—an organization that the dictator associated with the **Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK)**, a militant group whose ultimate objective was to achieve greater autonomy for **Kurds** in Turkey (thus threatening their territorial integrity).

Ultimately, NATO did not implement a no-fly zone in Northern Syria. Military officials noted that such an undertaking would either require consent from

Damascus (which would be unlikely) or the forceful defeat of Syria's air forces.⁹

In 2015, the continued deterioration of camp conditions fuelled a sizable self-driven on-migration of Syrians to Western Europe, through Greece's border with Turkey—and much to the EU's dismay, Erdogan hardly attempted to control this exodus.

That November, Turkey and the EU signed the **Joint Action Plan**. Turkey stated it would “step up its cooperation” with neighboring states to reduce the flow of irregular migrants, and the EU promised to help improve the Turkish Coast Guard's surveillance capacity. They also agreed to provide an additional €3 billion in financial aid, re-energize talks regarding Turkey's accession to the EU, and “support Turkey in meeting the requirements of the **Visa Liberalization Dialogue** (which would allow Turkish citizens to travel visa-free within the **Schengen Zone**).¹⁰

⁸ Jonny Hogg, “Syria 'No-Fly Zone' Not Being Considered: NATO General,” Reuters, November 26, 2014, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-syria-crisis-nato/syria-no-fly-zone-not-being-considered-nato-general-idUSKCN0JA10120141126>.

⁹ Hogg, “‘No-Fly Zone’ Not Being Considered,” 2014.

¹⁰ “EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan - AB,” https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/AB_Iliskileri/Tur_En_R_ealitons/15_october_2015_eu_turkey_joint_action_plan.pdf; “Meeting of Heads of State,” European Council, November 29, 2015, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/>

One year later, Erdogan upped the ante once more when he publicly threatened to “open the doors to Greece and Bulgaria [and] put the refugees on buses.”¹¹ This culminated in the signing of the **EU-Turkey Deal**, the EU pledged €6 billion in aid and also revitalized its commitments to Turkey’s EU/Schengen membership talks. Additionally, Greece was permitted to return “all new irregular migrants;” this effectively labeled Turkey as a safe country of return, despite its government’s recent crackdowns on human rights and free press.

press-releases/2015/11/29/eu-turkey-meeting-statement/; “Q&A: Turkey’s EU entry talks,” BBC, December 11, 2016, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/eu-rope/4107919.stm>.

¹¹ “Turkish president threatens to send millions of Syrian refugees to EU,” *The Guardian*, February 11, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/12/turkish-president-threatens-to-send-millions-of-syrian-refugees-to-eu>; M. Holehouse, “Migrant influx is ‘campaign of hybrid warfare,’” <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu11915798/EU-chief-Migrant-influx-is-campaign-of-hybrid-warfare-by-neighbours-to-force-concessions.html>; V. Pop, “EU seeks Turkish president’s help to stop refugee flow,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 8, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/eu-seeks-turkish-presidents-help-to-stop-refugee-flow-1444068094>; “EU, Turkey seek better relations at emergency refugee summit”, AP, November 29, 2015, <https://www.yahoo.com/news/eu-turkey-seek-better-relations-emergency-refugee-summit-164242787.html?ref=gs>.

Current Situation

The year is 2020, and there are currently over 3.6 million Syrian refugees residing in Turkey.¹² Feeling betrayed by NATO’s failure to help contain these outflows militarily, disappointed in the EU’s failure to share the humanitarian burden, and threatened by Kurdish nationalism in northern Syria, Erdogan took matters into his own hands by launching **Operation Peace Spring** in late 2019.

Although they had previously recognized the PKK as a terrorist organization, the EU strongly condemned Erdogan’s actions and suspended arms sales to Turkey.¹³ Drawing inspiration from previous successes, the Turkish dictator retaliated against these sanctions: “Hey EU, wake up! I say it again; if you try to frame our operation there as an invasion

¹² “EU-Turkey relations in light of the Syrian conflict and refugee crisis,” European Parliament, September 3, 2020, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI\(2020\)649327](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2020)649327).

¹³ Zia Weise and Jacopo Barigazzi, “EU countries agree to suspend arms exports to Turkey,” *Politico*, October 14, 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/turkey-kurds-assault-eu-to-suspend-arms-exports/>.

[rather than a defensive operation against the PKK], our task is simple: we will open the doors and send 3.6 million migrants to you.”¹⁴ Erdogan doubled down on this threat in February by opening its border to Western Europe, even providing free transportation.¹⁵

In exchange for resealing the Turkish western border, Erdogan has demanded the following: (1) public admission that Operation Peace Spring is not an invasion, but a defensive response to a security threat, (2) reversal of the military sanctions imposed in October 2019, and (3) additional financial aid to be allocated towards the (re)settlement of displaced Syrians residing in Turkey.

The members of this committee have been assembled to decide how the European Union should unilaterally respond to these stipulations. They will either have to acquiesce to Erdogan’s

demands or generate a strategy for managing the inevitable influx of refugees. In preparation for this discussion, please be sure to review all of the questions below. Please also feel free to email me with questions concerning the content of this background guide—I’ll do my best to minimize confusion in any way that I can, especially since we’re operating on a tighter schedule than most.

Questions to Consider

- To what extent should the EU heed Erdogan’s demands, if at all? If they choose to do so, what types of consequences might they face from their own citizens, as well as the international community in general?
- If the EU is unable to stop the strategically engineered migration of Syrian refugees, how should they collectively address it?

Answering this question will require delegates to balance their own country’s policies and cultures, as well as the collective

¹⁴ “Turkish President threatens Europe with an influx of migrants,” Brussels Times, October 10, 2019, <https://www.brusselstimes.com/news/eu-affairs/72747/if-criticized-erdogan-threatens-euro-pe-with-a-flow-of-migrants>.

¹⁵ Matina Stevis-Gridneff and Patrick Kingsley, “Turkey, Pressing E.U. for Help in Syria, Threatens to Open Borders to Refugees,” The New York Times, February 28, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/28/world/europe/turkey-refugees-Geece-erdogan.html>.

need for burden-sharing across the EU.

- Should the EU retaliate against Turkey, economically, politically, and/or militarily? If so, how?
- How might the EU combat a future threat of weaponized migration, from Turkey or elsewhere, in the future?

Countries

Delegates should work together to pass overarching directives in the front room while preserving and advancing their own country's migration agendas as much as possible. The information below may be used as a jumping-off point for delegates to conduct research. The dais will not accept position papers, but you are welcome to write one if you feel it would be helpful to your preparation process.

Bulgaria: As one of the EU's easternmost nations, Bulgaria bears an elevated responsibility for securing EU borders—especially along its southern border, which it shares with Turkey. Sofia's border policies are relatively

strict, but the EU has deemed that their infrastructure is still in need of significant improvement. Bulgaria's relationship with Turkey is friendly, with Ankara supporting Sofia's efforts to join the EU and NATO. Erdogan has also been diligently policing Turkey's border with Bulgaria since the 2016 EU-Turkey deal, but there is no guarantee that he will continue to honor these commitments in light of his recent actions. Bulgaria is a member of NATO, but NOT the Schengen Agreement (as of 2020).

Cyprus: Although Cyprus does not share any land borders with Turkey or the EU, it is highly vulnerable to migration influxes by sea. This is especially pertinent to this committee, considering Cyprus's long history of tension with Turkey—such is primarily due to frequent clashes between Turkish and Greek Cypriots (not to mention a Turkish invasion in the 1970s). According to a 2019 study by the UNHCR, Cypriots generally perceive refugees as threats to social stability. Their asylum system is also chronically

overwhelmed, as Cyprus receives an incredibly high volume of asylum applications from refugees who have arrived by sea. Cyprus is NOT a member of NATO, or the Schengen Agreement.

France: France presents itself as fully committed to protecting the human rights of asylum seekers entering the nation. However, surveys also show that growing numbers of French citizens believe that foreigners pose a threat to French national identity and culture. This makes it exceedingly difficult for migrants seekers to acquire French citizenship, or even integrate into the national culture at all. France has also passed a series of anti-Muslim laws in recent years, under the guise of counter-terrorism. Therefore, the French delegation is bound to have a difficult time maintaining its public integrity as a liberal democracy, while also appeasing its citizens. France is a member of both NATO and the Schengen Agreement.

Germany: In 2015, German Chancellor Angela Merkel implemented an

open-door policy towards asylum-seekers—and within four years, it became the country with the fifth-highest population of refugees.¹⁶ Merkel is also known to have found many loopholes in this policy, however, from deeming other countries as safe nations of return to discouraging westward migration to Europe on social media.¹⁷ Germany is a member of both NATO and the Schengen Agreement.

Greece: Due to its shared land and sea borders with Turkey, Greece often bears the brunt of Erdogan’s threats to orchestrate outflows of refugees into Western Europe. This is further complicated by citizens’ overall stances on immigration: while the majority of Greeks said they support taking in refugees fleeing violence in 2018, even more said they believed migrants are a burden on their country or that they opposed increased migration.¹⁸

¹⁶ Philip Oltermann, “How Angela Merkel’s great migrant gamble paid off,” *The Guardian*, August 30, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/30/angela-merkel-great-migrant-gamble-paid-off>.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Phillip Connor, “Fast facts on Greeks see migrants as Greece-Turkey border crisis deepens,” *Pew Research Center*, March 10,

Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to Greece that the EU formulates a contingency plan for burden-sharing, should Erdogan follow through on his threats to open its Western border. Greece is a member of both NATO and the Schengen Agreement.

Italy: Primarily due to geographical factors, Italy is generally classified as a center point of the European migration crisis. Italy is also no stranger to weaponized migration—on four occasions, Libyan president Muammar Gaddafi extracted significant concessions from Rome after threatening to “turn Europe black” should they refuse to cooperate.¹⁹ Italy will have a special interest in ensuring that the EU creates a robust system of burden sharing, should Erdogan follow through on his threats; because if Greece seals its border, southern Italy will become the next stop on the Mediterranean sea route. Italy is a

2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/03/10/fast-facts-on-how-greeks-see-migrants-as-greece-turkey-border-crisis-deepens/>.

¹⁹ Gregor Noll and Mariagiulia Giufre, “EU Migration Control: Made by Gaddafi?,” *Open Democracy*, February 25, 2011.

member of both NATO and the Schengen Agreement.

Poland: As of yet, Poland has refused to play any role in the relocation and/or resettlement of Syrian refugees.²⁰ Not only is their population highly resistant to the arrival of foreign refugees, especially those hailing from the Middle East, but also Polish government officials have publicly affirmed these beliefs as well. If Erdogan follows through with his threats, the Polish delegation will face significant pressure from the international community to share the responsibility of resettling refugees—especially with Germany (a country already overwhelmed with refugee arrivals) right on its doorstep; but they must also tread carefully, lest they lose public support at home. Poland is a member of both NATO and the Schengen Agreement.

Romania: Although Romania does not share a land border with Turkey, many

²⁰ Mateusz Mazzini, “Poland Demonized Refugees. Now It’s Struggling to Integrate Them,” *Foreign Policy*, March 29, 2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/03/29/poland-demonized-refugees-now-its-struggling-to-integrate-them/>.

refugees have historically made the journey to Bucharest via the Black Sea. This is an extremely perilous route, which places an inherent pressure on the Romanian government to accept those who take it. For these reasons, Romania will want to establish a comprehensive burden-sharing solution throughout this committee. Romania is a member of NATO, but NOT the Schengen Agreement (as of 2020).

Spain: Spanish attitudes towards foreigners are generally positive, however, discrimination tends to mount during periods of economic recession.²¹ Spain is also particularly vulnerable to irregular migration by sea, particularly from Northern Africa, but not quite as much as Italy and Greece when it comes to Erdogan's threatened outflows. Spain is a member of both NATO and the Schengen Agreement.

²¹ Alba Garcia-Cid, Luis Gomez-Jacinto, Isabel Hombrados-Mendieta, Mario Millan-Franco, and Gianluigi Moscato, "Discrimination and Psychological Well-Being of Migrants in Spain: The Moderating Role of Sense of Community," National Library of Medicine, September 18, 2020, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7531257/#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20Spanish%20National,appeared%20after%20the%20recent%20recession.>

United Kingdom: Generally, attitudes in the UK towards migrants are positive.²² The UK intended to exit the European Union in January 2020, however recent actions by Erdogan have stalled this process. The UK also participated in the 2019 decision to impose military sanctions against Turkey, and are therefore included in Erdogan's threats of retaliation (and thus a relevant stakeholder in our discussion). The UK that the committee's attempts to come to a resolution do not interfere with their plans to part ways. They will also be particularly interested in maintaining their credibility as a liberal state, despite their separation from the EU. The United Kingdom is a member of NATO, but NOT the Schengen Agreement.

Glossary

Ahmet Duvatoglu: Turkey's sitting Foreign Minister. Historically, he has issued threats of weaponized migration

²² Patrick Butler, "Most British people hold positive view of immigration, survey reveals," The Guardian, November 2, 2023, [https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/nov/03/most-british-people-hold-positive-view-of-immigration-survey-reveals.](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/nov/03/most-british-people-hold-positive-view-of-immigration-survey-reveals)

(publicly and privately) on Erdogan's behalf.

Bashar al-Assad: Sitting authoritarian president of Syria, and the target of the anti-regime uprisings which began during the Arab Spring.

European Union (EU): Economic and political union of 27 European nations. Members enjoy coordinated economic policies, as well as cooperation on military and political issues of shared concern.

EU-Turkey Deal: Deal struck between Turkey and the European Union in 2016, after Erdogan threatened to send Syrian refugees across the border to Greece and Bulgaria on buses. The EU sent more than €6 billion in humanitarian aid to Turkey and increased the resettlement of Syrian refugees within Turkey (effectively labeling it a safe country of return, despite a recent history of human rights crackdowns). The EU also agreed to accelerate visa liberalization talks for Turkish nationals, as well as talks on Turkish EU membership.

Joint Action Plan: Signed in 2015, the Joint Action Plan is somewhat of a predecessor to the EU-Turkey Deal. Turkey stated it would “step up its cooperation” with neighboring states to reduce the flow of irregular migrants, which included an additional €3 billion in financial aid, a new refugee facility for Turkey.²³ The Joint Action Plan also stipulated that the EU would “increase financial assistance offered to support Turkey in meeting the requirement of the Visa Liberalization Dialogue,” and “re-energize” talks regarding Turkey's accession into the EU, which Turkey had attempted for more than a decade to no avail.²⁴

Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK): The PKK is a militant group dedicated to creating greater autonomy for Kurds living in Turkey. They are widely recognized as a terrorist organization. Turkish President Erdogan recognizes

²³ “Meeting of Heads of State,” Consilium, 2015.

²⁴ “EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan,” “Q&A: Turkey's EU entry talks”, BBC.com, December 11, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/eu-rope/4107919.stm>.

the Syrian People’s Protection Units as an offshoot of the PKK.

Kurds: The Kurds are one of the world’s largest stateless populations, and many of them reside in Turkey and northern Syria.²⁵ Erdogan claims to be threatened by the prospect of a Kurdish separatist movement.

North-Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO): Collective defense treaty signed by 29 democratic European states, plus the United States in Canada. Turkey is a member of NATO, although many question whether or not this status should be revoked due to Erdogan’s repressive policies; thanks to the size of Turkey’s army, however, as well as its proximity to Russia, their strategic importance to the NATO alliance has withstood these critiques.

Operation Peace Spring: A military operation carried out by Erdogan against northern Syria in October 2019. The dual goal of this mission was to

contain the Kurds, as well as create a buffer area to which Syrian refugees could be repatriated. While Erdogan framed this assault as a defensive measure necessary to protect Turkey’s territorial integrity, the EU condemned and sanctioned Ankara for these actions.

People’s Protection Units (YPG): The Syrian Kurdish People’s Protection units are a powerful resistance group in the Syrian Civil War. Erdogan recognizes them as an offshoot of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK)—widely recognized as a terrorist organization—but the United States and its allies view it as a central component of their anti-ISIS operations.²⁶ This has caused tension between Turkey and its Western allies and partners.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan: Sitting president of Turkey. Despite his growing inclinations towards authoritarianism, he desperately desires membership in the European Union. Erdogan frequently

²⁵ “The Kurds’ Long Struggle With Statelessness,” Council on Foreign Relations, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/kurds-long-struggle-satelessness>.

²⁶ “What is the Syrian Kurdish YPG?” Reuters, October 5, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/what-is-syrian-kurdish-ypg-2023-10-05/>.

weaponizes Syrian migrants against Europe, in order to extract military and economic concessions as well.

Refugee: The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees defines refugees as “people forced to flee their own country and seek safety in another country. They are unable to return to their own country because of feared persecution as a result of who they are, what they believe in or say, or because of armed conflict, violence or serious public disorder.”²⁷ International law protects all people who meet these criteria from refoulement.

Schengen Area: A geographic zone made up of 27 European nations, within which there are no passport regulations for international travel. For example, a Portuguese national may enter Spain without a passport or visa. For many years, Erdogan has been attempting to acquire these privileges for Turkish citizens. ****EU nations and Schengen nations are not synonymous. Not all EU*

member states are part of the Schengen Zone, and vice versa. Delegates may find it useful to know which of these organizations their country is part of.

Visa Liberalization Dialogue: The process that Turkey must undergo for its citizens to gain passport-free access to the Schengen Area. A specific set of financial and political prerequisites must be satisfied for this to progress, and Erdogan has used weaponized migration as a means of coercing Western Europe into assisting in meeting these requirements.

Weaponized Migration: The process by which states (or other actors) use (threatened) migration movements as a means of acquiring political, economic, and/or military concessions from a target state.

²⁷ “Refugees,” The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees,” <https://www.unhcr.org/us/about-unhcr/who-we-protect/refugees>.

Committee Procedure

Whether this is your first crisis conference or your twelfth, it's super important for us all to be on the same page about the rules of the road for TUMUN VIII. Please take the time to read this section carefully, as the guidelines for this year's TUMUN Ad Hoc might look a bit different than those of other conferences and committees.

Front Room Procedure

Like any Model United Nations committee, delegates will gather together in one room for a group debate throughout each committee session. These debates will be structured according to standard parliamentary procedure rules, facilitated by the chair(s) of the committee. This process is referred to as **front-room debate** in crisis committees, and delegates' primary objective is to draft and pass **directives**.

Structurally, directives appear very similar to the working papers and resolutions you may have seen in General Assembly and/or Specialized committees—however, there are several key differences to bear in mind. First, delegates are not intended to spend the entirety of TUMUN developing 1-2 directives per conference (as is often the case in a GA). Rather, they are expected and encouraged to **pass several directives per committee session**. This is because unlike a General Assembly or Specialized committee, the “current situation” of crisis committees is constantly evolving at the discretion of the Crisis Director, regardless of the pace of the committee. If you work together to pass more directives, your collective actions will have a greater impact on the general direction of the committee; similarly, if you fail to do so, you will likely end up getting backlogged.

Secondly, directives are significantly shorter than GA working papers. They are intended to deal with one specific issue, rather than an overarching one—in other words, if your crisis committee centers around the Collapse of the Soviet Union, you should not strive to create one grand strategy to prevent this from occurring; instead,

you might pass targeted directives aimed at controlling nationalist activities in a certain province, improving the efficiency of a major factory, and/or responding to government criticism. As such, don't spend too much time trying to identify and eliminate every single loophole in your directives. These types of directives take far too much time to write, and they also leave significantly more room for things to go wrong. As a general rule, directives should generally consist of 6 clauses or less.

Finally, directives have a genuine impact on the progression of the committee—unlike a GA, you will have the opportunity to see the results of your actions in the “real world.” Things may not always work out exactly as expected, but don't worry, that's part of the fun!

Backroom Procedure

While you are engaging in lively debate in the main committee room, you will also have the chance to submit **private directives**, or “**crisis notes**,” to the staff. These will be processed in the same manner as public directives, in that your actions have the potential to drive the direction of the committee—only this time, your fellow delegates will have no idea who’s behind what. If your character has a goal they’d like to achieve, for instance, you may use crisis notes as a means of setting an evil plan in motion; similarly, if the committee’s public directives get in the way of your objectives, some crisis notes may be used to undermine and/or sabotage them.

Throughout the progression of our committee, your crisis notes will culminate in a “crisis arc.” If you come prepared with an entire plan for how you will achieve your backroom goals, however, do not expect this to come to fruition right away. **Instead, please be prepared to provide the backroom instructions one step at a time. This way we can reply to your notes quickly and inform you of the outcome of your actions, which should *then* inform what your next step should be. More often than not, delegates will have to adjust their crisis arcs throughout committee—this is partially because we have to be mindful of the pace of committee, making it very difficult for us to allow an elaborate assassination attempt to succeed on the first or second committee session.**

Finally, please ensure that your crisis notes contain information about your long-term goals. This way we can better understand your motives, and also see that you have developed a feasible plan of action. If you have any additional questions on how to write and/or format crisis notes, you are welcome to send me an email—additionally, the TUMUN delegate training on February 9 will include a detailed explanation of how to craft crisis notes.

Crisis Updates

While delegates are debating in the front room, backroom staffers will be processing all of your public and private directives. Every few hours, the crisis director will enter the front room to provide an update on how your actions have influenced the situation on the ground—we may also incorporate some of our own ideas to maintain momentum (and also throw you off!). After each presentation, you will have the opportunity to ask questions of the crisis director.

Technology Policy

In TUMUN crisis committees, we utilize the **two-pad system** for exchanging notes between the front room and backroom. In other words, you may have up to two “subplots” of your crisis arc in motion at one time. The system works as follows:

1. Label two legal pads (provided) as follows: **Character’s Name (Pad 1), Character’s Name (Pad 2)**
2. Whenever you wish to submit your first crisis note, handwrite your instructions in Pad 1 and wait for the Crisis Director to collect it; the backroom will be in regular communication with the chairs, so we will try our best to be prompt
3. Once the crisis staff has collected your first pad, begin writing a second crisis note on Pad 2; when the Crisis Director returns, they will return your Pad 1 (with a response) and take your Pad 2 for processing
4. Repeat! Take a look at how the staff responded to your first note, and then tell us how to proceed (incorporating our feedback, if applicable)

For public directives, you should also prepare to handwrite. You can either utilize the extra pages of your crisis notepads or bring extra paper. **We will also enforce a general no tech policy, as devices can easily become distracting in committee—parliamentary debate is hard work, and every delegate deserves to have the full attention of everyone in the room!**



Community Guidelines

Throughout TUMUN VIII, you are expected to uphold Tufts' standards of honesty, integrity, respect, and inclusion. Please use respectful language with your staffers and fellow delegates both in and out of committee, to create a safe space for all participants. Tufts University prohibits discrimination against and harassment of any individual, regardless of their status in the TUMUN conference, because of: race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, age, religion, disability, sex, gender identity, and/or expression, sexual orientation, military or veteran status, genetic information, the intersection of these identities or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state or local law. For more information on these guidelines, please visit the website of Tufts' Office of Equal Opportunity.

Finally, please be sure to incorporate these values into your committee activities. We will be discussing sensitive subject matter in our committee sessions, and it is expected that you treat these issues with the respect they deserve. In the front room, be sure to only use respectful terminology in referring to those impacted by the crisis situation (as well as each other). **In your crisis notes, do not ask the staff to execute any plan that involves war crimes, crimes against humanity, gendered violence, hate speech, and/or any other act deemed inappropriate by the crisis staff.** If we receive any such instructions, we will inform the delegate that their crisis note has been rejected on these grounds. If the behavior becomes persistent, we may be obligated to involve the student's faculty advisor.

If, at any point during TUMUN VIII, you feel that a conference participant (delegate or staff) has violated any of the standards described above, please do not hesitate to contact your chair, your crisis director, your faculty advisor, or a member of the TUMUN secretariat. As long as delegates exercise appropriate discretion and ask questions if they are confused, however, I do not expect to encounter any issues on this front!



International Membership Table

To aid in your preparations, here is a chart indicating the international organizations of which each country is a member, as of 2020 (when this committee takes place).

Country	European Union	Schengen	NATO
Bulgaria	X		X
Cyprus	X		
France	X	X	X
Germany	X	X	X
Greece	X	X	X
Italy	X	X	X
Poland	X	X	X
Romania	X		X
Spain	X	X	X
United Kingdom	X (seeking exit)		X

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