



GEMS Cambridge International School Abu Dhabi Model of United Nations 2020

CIAMUN

United Nations Security Council Background Guide

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INDEX

- Letter from the Chairs3
- Introduction to the committee.....3

Topic A: The Arctic Territorial Dispute.....4

- Key Terms
- Introduction to the Topic
- History
- Discussion of the Topic
- Questions to consider
- Bibliography

Topic B: Bringing a Peaceful End to the Sudden Conflict in Northern Syria8

- Background information
- Discussion of the topic
- Humanitarian Impact
- Questions to Consider
- Bibliography

• Further readings12



LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS

Dear delegates,

Our name is Maryam and Aryan, we are honored to be serving as your chairs for CIAMUN's first-ever Security Council committee. Our team is excited to host all of you. It is certainly inspiring to see the passionate youth of today come together to discuss controversial international issues. We hope that by the end of these three exciting days, you grow to be more empathetic. We are positive that by the end of CIAMUN 2020, you will have grown as a person who views the world with empathetic eyes. This will be an amazing opportunity for all of you to sharpen your speaking and negotiation skills.

The above-mentioned topics have been chosen carefully as we feel that they've not received enough attention. No proper resolutions have been reached regarding these issues. As the esteemed youth delegates of the Security Council, we hope we can showcase to the world that we are concerned about influential political issues. After all, we need to fight for the world we will be flourishing in. This is our responsibility, our future.

Please feel free to contact us regarding any inquiries at CIAMUN.UNSC@gmail.com. Looking forward to meeting you at CIAMUN 2020.

If you want to get in contact with any of the chairs email us to our MUN email at ciamun.unsc@gmail.com.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The United Nations Security Council was formed on October 24th, 1945. It is the primary core body of the UN. The UNSC is capable of imposing sanctions, providing UN peacekeeping intervention and investigations and appointing special envoys. The Security Council's main goal is to provide international peace and security according to the UN Charter. The Security Council consists of 5 permanent member states and 10 non-permanent member states. The 5 permanent states (P5) have the power to veto a resolution. These states are Russia, United States of America, France, United Kingdom and China. The ten non-permanent member states are elected by the General Assembly and serve on a 2-year basis. However due to the severity of the discussed topics, we will be adding non-Security Council members for the purpose of a fruitful, engaging and heated debate.

During our conference veto nations will have the power to veto.

TOPIC A: THE ARCTIC TERRITORIAL DISPUTE

Keywords:

Exclusive economic zone (EEZ): Also known as the default maritime border is when every country has 200 nautical miles of seawater where they have a right to exploit natural resources however they cannot enforce laws and regulations outside their territorial waters.

Territorial waters: 12 miles of the coast where all laws and regulations of that country are applied

Continental shelf: A part of a countries landmass that is only covered with ocean

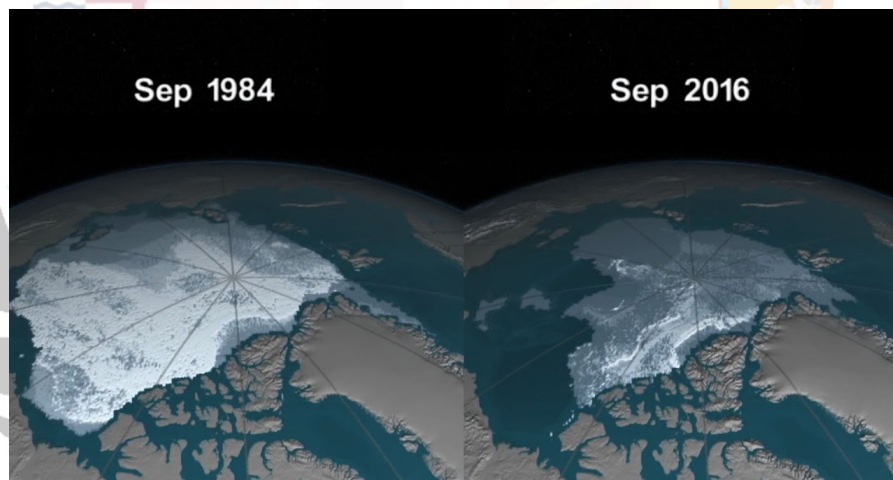
International waters: Waters outside a nation's territorial waters.

Fisheries protection zone (FPZ): Norway has set a limit quota that each country can fish in the EEZ of Svalbard.

Introduction:

The Arctic territorial dispute has been an issue that has been ongoing for even longer than a century. However, as time passes by the issue gets even more complex as ice is melting in the Arctic faster than ever before at 13% per decade. However, due to recent human activity, this number is subject to increase at a much faster pace due to global warming causing the extinction of mammals and sea animals and sea levels to rise globally. But in the eyes of other states, they have viewed this as an opportunity for political and economic gain.

As more ice is melting, now, it easier to exploit natural resources like natural gas. The Arctic region is believed to have 30% of the world's natural gas reserves and a quarter of the world's oil reserves. Due to these reasons, countries continue to lay territorial claims over the Arctic. Some states have even militarized land they claim to be theirs. The Russian Federation has even gone as far as hoisting its flag on the Arctic seabed.

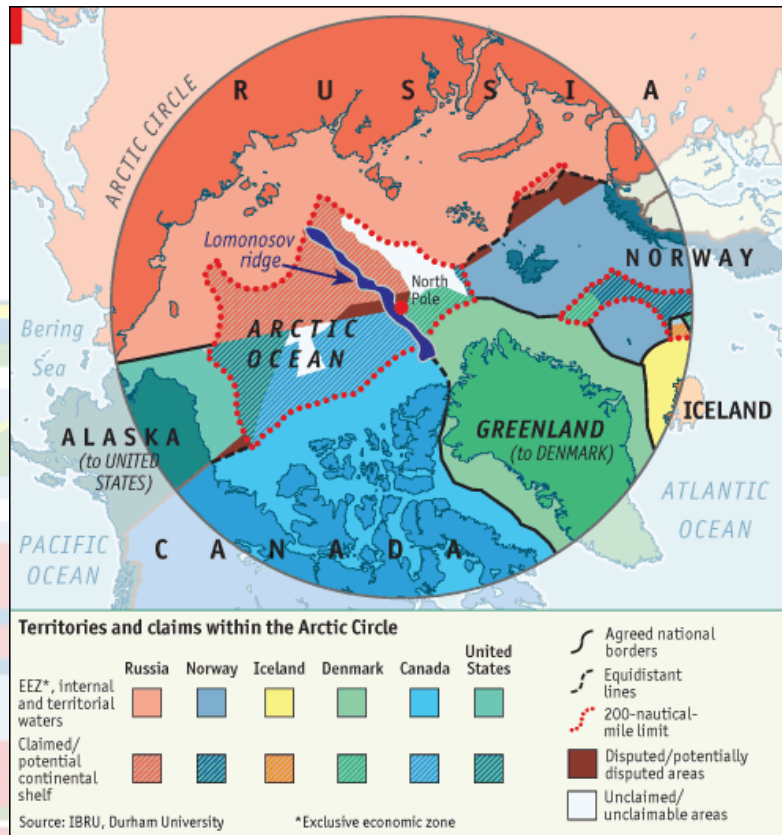


History:

Canada was the first country to lay claims to the Arctic in 1925. Following that was the Soviet Union in 1937. However, during those times having more access to the Arctic only meant more air space and in turn more air routes for the nations. However, there started to be more of an issue. During the Cold War the Arctic was used as a base for nuclear submarines. And to solve this case, the United Nations declared the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. This defined the Arctic as a no nuclear weapon zone. However, there has been recent activity taking place of nuclear submarines roaming the Arctic and Russia has laid wreckage of nuclear submarines in their Arctic territorial waters. With this to keep in mind the UN convention of the law of seas (UNCLOS) played an influential part as it has been used for the Arctic nations to extend their Arctic claims. However, the UNCLOS wasn't aware of the consequences of climate change and global warming. Thus, at the time the convention was made (1982), the Arctic economic exclusive zone was inaccessible during that time. However, as time is passing it has become more accessible as the ice is melting.

Discussion of the Topic:

Territorial Claims



Since the ratification of the UNCLOS, each signatory had the chance to submit their continental shelf claims outside the EEZ to a specific UN committee known as the commission on the limits of the continental shelf (CLCS). This is a team of scientists that determine whether the claims are valid or not. So far only 4 out of the 5 arctic nations have signed the treaty. However, if nations can prove that their continental shelf beyond the EEZ then they can apply to the UN to drill on that area of ocean. So far only Denmark has submitted an official claim in 2015 however their claim counters and overlaps Russia's and Canada's claims which were submitted earlier.

Shipping routes



As ice caps are melting this has only opened the idea that more

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shipping routes are to be made which in turn means more money for the Arctic nations and most nations globally. One which has already been made is the Northwest passage and there's currently a dispute between Canada and the United States on who owns the northwest passage. Canada believes that it is their internal waters however the US believes that is an international waterway which means any nation is allowed to pass there. Now there are obvious reasons why Canada would benefit if it was their waters. It would mean that they can charge ships to pass like the Suez or Panama canals boosting Canada's economy drastically and Canada will also have the power to dictate nation's economies. This will be handy to increase Canada's dominance on the international stage.

In 1985 was when relations between the US and Canada got most heated when a US coast guard icebreaker was passing through international waters and Canada considered it a breach of their sovereignty. This passage has proven to be very effective for example in September 2013 for the first time a commercial boat carrier made its journey from Vancouver to Finland saving 80,000\$ in fuel and adding 25% of the cargo. And this was when China became interested in the northwest passage even

Secondly, the other routes mentioned on the map above are still inaccessible however if the arctic will continue to melt at the pace it currently is then it's expected the entire arctic ice will disappear by 2040 which will ultimately make these routes accessible even way before 2040.

If this dispute is still unresolved by the time those routes start to become accessible it'll only tense relations between Arctic nations and highly increase the chance of a new cold war.



Svalbard and its significance to the issue:

Svalbard is an island located around the arctic whose sovereignty lies under Norway. This is stated under Article 1 of the Svalbard treaty. However, Articles 2 and 3 massively constricts Norway's sovereignty to the island with massive conditions those conditions to be put simply consist of equal fishing and hunting rights in the territorial waters of Svalbard and equal access to the islands and territorial waters including mining and access to natural resources so long as they abide Norwegian law obviously and the other articles ensures no military bases action or weapons are on the archipelago. the Svalbard treaty also allows Norway to set quotas on fish caught within 200 nautical miles. Ensures that all communication towers are accessible to party members. However, this has caused conflict to arise as Russia believes that Norway has no rights or sovereignty over the FPZ and EEZ zones. but the main issue here is that both the Svalbard treaty and the UNCLOS have caused confusion on who owns what and disagreements between arctic nations.

Questions to consider:

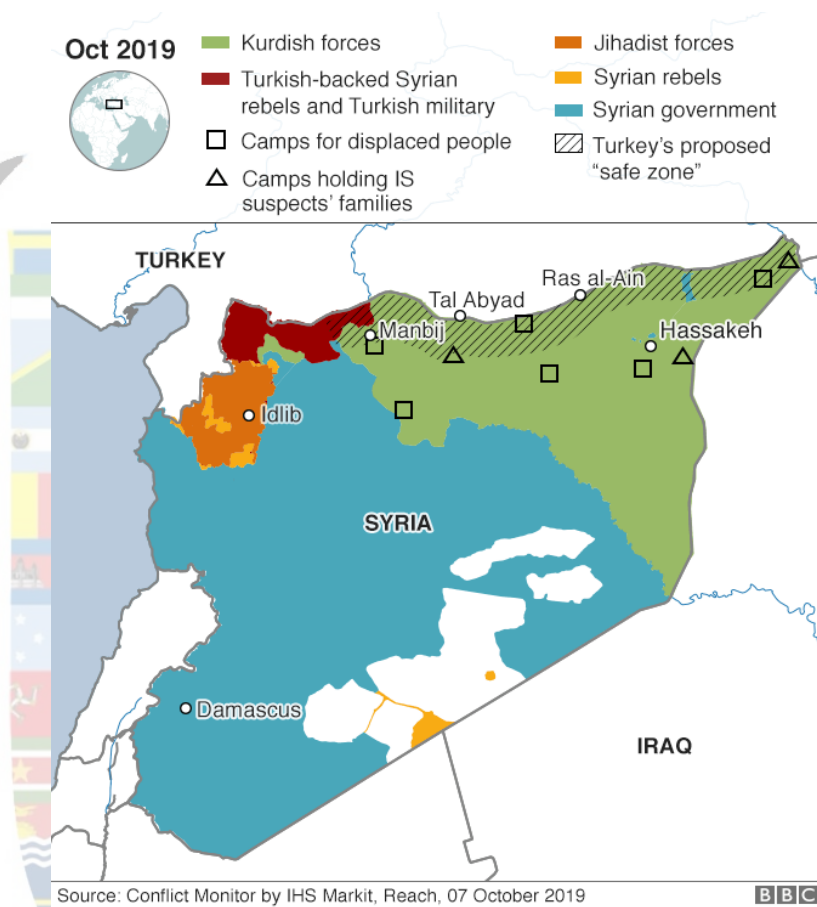
- What if Arctic Nations decide to build artificial islands to extend their claims, how would your country deal with this?

- Does your country believe anyone has a claim to the upcoming shipping routes?
- How does your country believe that the natural resources in the Arctic can be efficiently and sustainably managed and exploited in order to benefit the whole international community?
- Which state actors or international organizations should be in charge of managing such resources according to our country's beliefs?
- How can impacts to the global economy be compensated and utilized to the advantage of the international community?
- What does your country believe it can be done to prevent the currently increasing military presence in the Arctic?
- Does your country believe there should be a new international Arctic treaty?
- Does your country believe that the Svalbard Treaty should be modified?

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TOPIC B: BRINGING A PEACEFUL END TO THE SUDDEN CONFLICT IN NORTHERN SYRIA

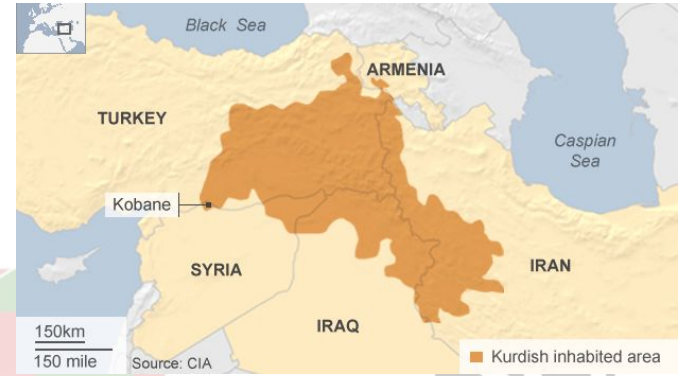
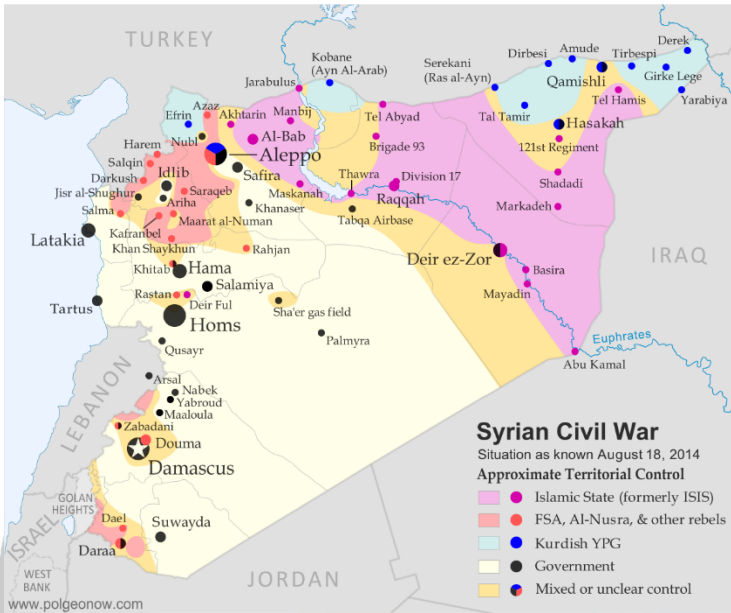


A note to all delegates: This study guide was written in early November when the conflict had just originated. Please make sure to follow up on the most recent developments regarding this issue.

Background Information:

With the start of the Arab Spring, some authoritarian rulers have been thrown out of power while others have retained their power. Syria too felt the effects of growing civil unrest across the region. People took to the streets demanding that President Bashar al-Assad step down. Armed clashes between the government, the Free Syrian Army and various rebel groups resulted in a power vacuum in northern Syria. It is important to note that Bashar al-Assad's regime was backed by Iran and Russia and the Iran-backed Hezbollah party in Lebanon. The rebel groups were supported by the USA and Turkey. Russia says to have bombed only ISIS bases while the opposition says that they were bombing primarily the anti-Assad regime groups.

The terrorist organization ISIS took this opportunity to establish a stronghold in northern Syria. They started conquering city after city starting in 2013. The FSA was defeated. By this time, the FSA had degenerated into small factions of undisciplined soldiers. By the end of 2014, ISIS held one-thirds of Syria. A significant area that ISIS had captured belonged to Syria's largest ethnic minority group, the Kurds. YPG (People's Protection Units), a Kurdish militia based in Syria, effectively pushed back ISIS. USA supported these attacks by providing air support and training against ISIS. In 2015, YPG and non-Kurdish militias came together to form what is now known as the SDF or the Syrian Democratic Forces. This led to a predominantly Kurdish led region in northeastern Syria. By 2019, ISIS had been almost completely wiped off. As of today, ISIS controls less than 1% of Syrian territory.

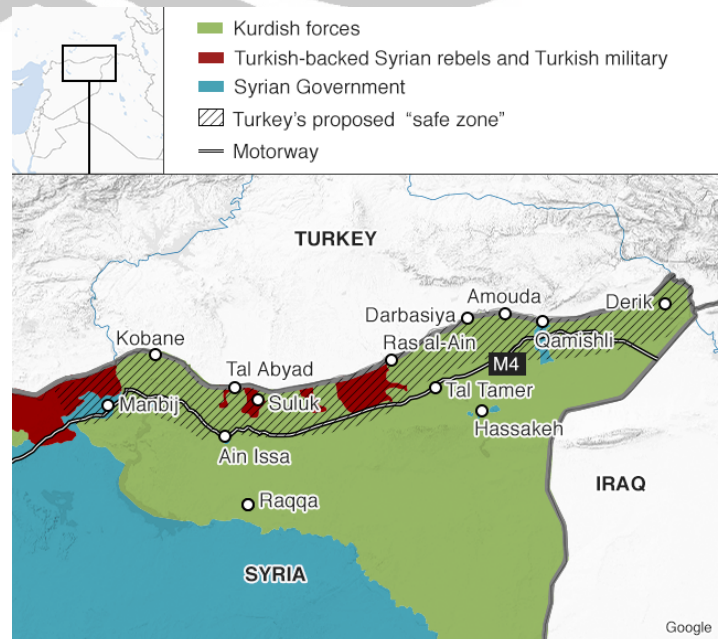


If you look back at the Map 1, you'll notice that there's a small region in northwestern Syria that's under Turkish control. Turkey first intervened in the Syrian civil war in 2016 to push back ISIS. And then in 2018 to push back the YPG led forces. It is important that we glance back to focus on the relationship between Turkey and the Kurds. The Kurds are the world's largest minority without their own state. They are indigenous people originating from the areas shown in Map 3. There has always been hostility between Turkey and the Kurds. The Kurdish uprisings in the 1920s and 1930s for an independent state were all put out. In 1978, the PKK party was set up to fight for a Kurdish state. Turkey has since then declared the PKK a terrorist group. There have been constant armed conflicts between the two parties. The Kurds had also been denied their rights and citizenship under Bashar al-Assad and his father, Hafez. Turkey firmly believes that YPG in Syria is an extension of the PKK in Turkey.

Discussion of the Topic:

As we mentioned earlier, by 2019, A Kurdish led autonomous region had been set up in northeastern Syria (refer to Map 1). The Kurds set up displacement camps and detention centers for ISIS members and their families. The US also set up military camps in the Kurdish area and began to patrol the Turkey-Syria border.

The growing influence of the Kurds in northern Syria began to worry the Turkish government. Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan had been long proposing a Turkey-administered safe zone that would run almost 30 km into northern Syria and would be 480 km long. This, he believed, would help to push back YPG forces. It is also an evident fact that Turkey has generously accepted around 3.6 million Syrian refugees. The Turkish President stressed that the safe zone would be used to relocate refugees back into this strip of Syria. Erdoğan took this plan to the US and Russia but neither superpowers were onboard. Erdoğan took it to the UN General Assembly in September 2019.



In an attempt to avoid an

offensive, Turkish and American militaries agreed to set up a “security mechanism” 5 km into the Syrian border. This area was to be free of YPG, but the USA insisted on not calling it a safe zone. American and Turkish armies would patrol this area and the YPG co-operated, withdrawing fighters and removing weaponry.

On the 6th of October 2019, Erdoğan made a phone call to the US President and said that a military operation into Syria to establish the much talked about “safe zone” was about to begin in a few days. The USA responded by saying that it would have no role in the attack and immediately ordered all American troops to withdraw, changing years of American policy. The Americans left northern Syria, leaving the Kurds feeling betrayed and green-lighting Turkey’s planned incursion. And then on October 9th, Turkey sent ground troops over the border. It proceeded with bombing Syrian towns, displacing 200,000 civilians and killing more than 200. The Turkish military soon reached the M4 Highway (refer to map below). This road plays a crucial role in connecting.

Qamishli and Kobani, two Kurdish population centers. Once you have control of the road, you can divide the Kurdish forces effectively. Amidst all of the chaos, a lot of ISIS members held captive under the Kurdish detention centers are reported to have escaped.



The SDF promised to give anything to regain control of their land. After fighting for 4 days, the Kurds made a shocking revelation. They struck a deal with President Bashar al-Assad to try and repel the Turkish advancement into Turkey. The Kurds, who had always fought against the Assad regime, were now his most strategic and crucial allies.

Five days after the Turkish attack, Turkey and Russia struck a deal that said both countries will patrol the region together. Turkey got the land it had captured. The rest went to Russia and the Syrian government. We still don’t know what will happen to the land the Kurds still own. Withdrawal of US troops is leading to more change than the area has seen in years. The Kurds have essentially surrendered to Assad and this might be the end of their dream of a semi-autonomous region.

Humanitarian Impact:

In the border town of Tal Abyad, hospital workers were forced to abandon at least one hospital because of shelling, according to Médecins Sans Frontières.

And according to UNICEF, a water pumping station that serves 400,000 people was attacked and taken out of service.

"The situation on the ground is becoming increasingly dire, and once again, civilians are paying the highest price," Misty Buswell, Middle East policy director at the International Rescue Committee, said in a

statement. "There are already reports of [water] shortages in some rural areas, with possibly much worse to be seen in a few days if services are not able to get back up and running soon."

UNICEF, IRC, CARE International, and some other groups temporarily suspended services in the border area, evacuated foreign staff and asked local staff to remain home. If humanitarian services continue to be cut off, the situation could quickly worsen, Karl Schembri, a spokesperson for the Norwegian Refugee Council, told NPR.

"These people are already under extreme duress," he says. "There are a lot of displaced-persons camps there that are completely dependent on aid services, and if they are cut off, that would put lives at immediate risk."

By October 11th, Turkish troops had captured several Kurdish villages and blocked roads between others, The Associated Press reported. Riots broke out at al-Hol, a camp near the border that was used to detain the wives and children of suspected Islamic State fighters.

Many of the displaced people are fleeing south, deeper into Syria, says Aleksandar Milutinovic, Syria country director for CARE. As the situation unfolds, it may become difficult to keep them from unintentionally winding up back in harm's way, squeezed between the Turkish offensive and the civil war.

"We're trying to understand where they can find safety," he says.

Meanwhile, Milutinovic says, humanitarian groups fear that the offensive could disrupt aid supply lines, which have been coming into Syria from Iraq.

"We really want to keep those lines open, so we don't face a shortage of food and other supplies," he says. "If the conflict continues, we expect those things will be depleted very fast. And we are very concerned about medical facilities. Unfortunately, in any conflict zone, some doctors and medical employees have to leave, leaving very few resources to care for those people."

If and when the military campaign settles, there may be further humanitarian challenges ahead. In September, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced plans to return up to 2 million Syrian refugees currently living in Turkey to so-called "safe zones" in conquered territory in Syria. That plan was met with outcry from human rights advocates, who fear that such zones would be inaccessible to humanitarian workers and could become a backdrop for human rights violations by Turkish armed forces.

-As reported by National Public Radio with a few adjustments to accommodate for the dates.

Questions to Consider:

- What does your country believe are the potential benefits and drawbacks of the Turkish incursion?
- How have the other major stakeholders been affected? Will these changes be for the good or the bad?
- Is your country supporting Syrian refugees? If yes, how and why?
- What are the solutions your country might propose to this crisis?

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(All of the below mentioned sources are excellent references for further research.)

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