
ASMUN Conference 2019



Committee guide World Food Programme

CONTENTS

CHAIRS -----	3
<i>SANNE VAN WEERS</i> -----	3
<i>KOEN HAZEKAMP</i> -----	3
COUNTRIES IN THE COMMITTEE -----	4
INTRODUCTION AND TASK-----	5
HUNGER CRISIS IN SYRIA -----	6
THE SYRIAN CIVIL WAR-----	6
SIEGES AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES -----	7
INFRASTRUCTURE-----	8
THE CONSEQUENCES ON HUMAN RIGHTS -----	8
MALNUTRITION -----	9
SURROUNDING NATIONS-----	10
PROBLEMS DEALING WITH THE HUNGER CRISIS -----	10
HEALTHY FOOD-----	11
EXISTING ASSETS -----	11
BLOC POSITIONS -----	12
AFRICA -----	12
ASIA-----	12
LATIN AMERICA -----	13
MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES -----	13
WESTERN COUNTRIES-----	13
SOURCES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH-----	14
SOURCES-----	14
The Syrian civil war -----	14
Sieges: -----	14
Infrastructure -----	14
Consequences on human rights -----	14
Malnutrition -----	14
Surrounding nations -----	14
FURTHER SOURCES -----	15
SOURCES PICTURES: -----	15

CHAIRS

Dear delegates of the World Food Program,

We are very pleased to be chairing during the 2019 ASMUN conference as we believe Model United Nations can be a great opportunity for delegates to learn to understand and work with different views, perspectives and – of course – the ideas and thoughts that go with those views. Sanne and I are very motivated to help our delegates improve both their debating skills and negotiation and understanding abilities. We are looking forward to see you flourish the 30th of January.

Besides that, we would love to encourage all delegates – also those who dislike speaking in public or a Model United Nations in general – to prepare a position paper and an opening speech; this makes debating a lot easier and (maybe) therefore also a bit more fun. We know that, for some, it might be relatively tough to speak in public, but we will do our very best to create an environment in our committee in which everyone is able to debate peacefully and freely. Remember though, that – in the end – we are not simply there to correct delegates and steer the debate, but we are mainly there to help the gathered nations to reach that *one* highly demanded outcome: a resolution.

SANNE VAN WEERS

My name is Sanne van Weers, I am 17 years old and currently in VWO 6, gymnasium TTO, at CS Vincent van Gogh Lariks in Assen. I am not sure about the study I would like to do next year, but it will probably be Physics in Groningen or European Public Health in Maastricht. When I was in the 4th grade I had my first experience with public debating during MEP. In the 5th grade I had ASMUN training and I did HSP-MUN and OLMUN. Furthermore, I was a committee chair of MEP twice. As I liked this all, I am very excited to now become a chair of the WFP together with Koen.

KOEN HAZEKAMP

My name is Koen Hazekamp, I am eighteen years of age and in the final year of my secondary education (TTO at CS Vincent van Gogh in Assen). I am still in doubt what to study, but I did sign up for the study International Relations and International Organization. Together with Sanne, I will be guiding you during the conference the 30th of January. I really like Model United Nations, debating and politics in general. I attended quite a few conferences, like ASMUN 2018, HSP-MUN and OLMUN and I will participate in the debating contest Op Weg Naar Het Lagerhuis this year. Most importantly though, I am looking forward to see all the delegations excel during ASMUN 2019!

COUNTRIES IN THE COMMITTEE

- The People's Republic of China
- The Russian Federation
- United Kingdom
- United states of America
- France
- Turkey
- Norway
- Switzerland
- Yemen
- Lebanon
- Saudi Arabia
- Jordan
- Ethiopia
- Syria
- Korea
- Sweden
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Myanmar
- El salvador
- Coite d'ivoir
- Kyrgyzstan
- Bolivia
- Alger
- Indonesia
- Haiti
- Colombia
- Bhutan
- Armenia

INTRODUCTION AND TASK

Welcome delegates to the committee of the World Food Program. The World food program is the largest humanitarian organization in the world and is a part of the UN. It was established in 1961 and now provides food assistance to over 91 million people in 83 different countries. The goals of the World Food Program are:

- "Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies"
- "Support food security and nutrition and (re)build livelihoods in fragile settings and following emergencies"
- "Reduce risk and enable people, communities and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs"
- "Reduce undernutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger"
- "Zero Hunger in 2030"¹

The last of these goals is goal 2 of the sustainable development goals, the achievement of this is the priority of the World Food Program.²

As of this moment, a humanitarian crisis is going on in the country of Syria. This has been the effect of a civil war that has been lasting for 7 years now. Through many fights and sieges, people have lost the ability to feed themselves and their children. Furthermore, as many education and medical facilities have been lost, quality of live is further dropping, with a less and less bright future as a consequence.

It is now your task as delegates to find a solution to the crisis in Syria, keeping in mind that intervention is not a possibility, that we must solve human rights issues whilst at the same time improving living conditions.

But keep in mind, reducing hunger to zero is the utmost priority of the WFP and that is also our priority in Syria.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Food_Programme

² <http://www1.wfp.org/zero-hunger>

HUNGER CRISIS IN SYRIA

THE SYRIAN CIVIL WAR

The humanitarian crisis in Syria is caused by the civil war that has been rampaging across the nation since 2011. Even now, Syrian governmental forces clash with rebel organizations, whilst there exists a ceasefire. The conflict is international as many countries around the world are involved in a certain degree with some even



fighting. Estimates state that about 360.000 people have been killed and another 150.000 missing, presumed dead. In just the month of October 2018, 138 deaths were reported. How did the peaceful protests of 2011 turn into one of the largest and bloodiest civil wars since the start of the millennium?

In 2011 the Arab spring rampaged through the Arabian world, starting protests everywhere and overthrowing multiple established dictatorships. In January, the Wall Street Journal asked Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad whether he believed if the wave of protests, now known as the Arab spring, that had already overthrown governments in Tunisia and Egypt, would reach Syria. He answered negative, stating that the pro-American sentiments of those governments had been downfall, but he would be wrong.

The Syrian people had been disappointed by the rise of president Assad. When he took office, he had the reputation of a reformer and people had hope in a brighter future, but he eventually took his power back and made a ring of contacts around him rich by liberating the markets. Even before the protests, people had started complaining about the unemployment, the corruption and lack of freedom under the government of President Assad, but Assad didn't change course.

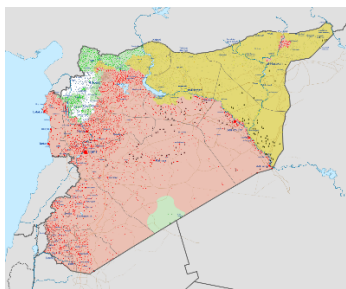
Then the Arab spring hit Syria, peaceful protests started around the country and the government responded in force. Security forces beat and even fired on the protesters in an attempt to stop the tide of instability spreading through the nation. As protests grew, so did the response of the government. Sometimes the government would surround neighbourhoods or even entire cities, that had become hubs of resistance, with tanks and artillery and cut the communications and utilities supply to those hubs. This in turn caused the protesters to take up arms to first defend themselves and later to rid themselves of the security forces.

There is no clear point where the unrest turned into civil war, but the rebels slowly became more and more organized and started fighting more with the Syrian government. Most of the militias fought with their own leaders and recognized no higher umbrella groups, but Free Syrian Army, a group of defectors from the Syrian army, claimed leadership over them. Whilst multiple attempts were made by both the UN and the Arab League to create peace, fighting continued and even increased into 2012, whilst the international community was

choosing sides in the battle. Russia, having military bases in Syria already, back the government, together with Iraq, a good ally of Syria. Most western powers had become more and more critical of Assad and had even called for his resignation. Now they supported the rebel groups in varying degrees.

During 2012 rebel groups made great progress against the Syrian government forces, even attacking Aleppo, Syria's largest city, in July. The government forces were however able to start resisting and by early 2013, the conflict had turned into a stalemate, whilst international allies increased their funding.

Islamist groups quickly rose to power in 2013 as the other rebel groups fell to infighting and exhaustion. Especially the terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant was able to gain a lot of ground. Eventually a coalition of Arab states and the United States started flying more airstrike missions against ISIL and by 2016 was a but a shade of its former self, having been beat down by Kurds, rebels, airstrikes and Syrian governmental forces.



The Syrian government has since been able to gain a lot of ground on the rebel groups, now again controlling a large part of the country, but there are still some cities held by rebel groups. And even though there is a ceasefire, fighting sparsely continues whilst people expect a mass military operation by the Syrian government into the last rebel stronghold of Idlib. The situation has calmed down and the country is rebuilding, but the war hasn't ended, and many places could still get besieged.

SIEGES AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

The consequences of this war have been far-reaching for the people living in Syria. Many people have been displaced out of their homes, towns have been destroyed and families shattered. Furthermore, many towns have been besieged and some areas are still under siege.

A siege is a military tactic in which an area, or sometimes even an entire town, will be blocked off from the outside world. This will be done by tanks, artillery and soldiers. This form of warfare does not only affect the fighting parties, but also the citizens living in the besieged areas. These sieges can have far reaching consequences on their lives. They can have a lack of resources or even experience starvation when a siege takes a long time.

[Siege watch](#) as of the time of writing this document recognizes nineteen sieges in Syria, five of which are still populated, these numbers might differ in the future. The areas are defined as besieged when: *"These are the areas that have been under long-term siege (6+ months), and are currently being monitored by the Siege Watch project,"*. Furthermore, Siege watch has forty more areas on it's watchlist. An area gets on the watchlist are: *"These areas are at high risk of being under long-term siege and may be added to the Siege Watch monitoring project in the future. The communities in this category are either under Partial Siege - where many of the conditions of a siege are met but there remain a limited number of un-blockaded access points that may be usable at least part of the time - or have been besieged for 6 months or less."*

These sieges cause can cause mass starvation in the areas afflicted. Even though as of the moment of writing, there are now high tier sieges which cause starvation, this might change

in the future. A mass offensive by the Syrian government is expected to start in the upcoming time. This means that places currently on the watchlist could be besieged as well as new areas in the governments strive to end the conflict by eliminating their opposition. Further consequences of these sieges are the lack of medicine and education for the inhabitants of the areas. The lack of medicine causes short term problems, whilst the lack of education could cause long term effects as the people will be less educated on topics such as gender equality, or more basic topics.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Not only are areas under siege, bombings have also caused massive damage to the Syrian infrastructure. Which has had far reaching consequences which will continue to wreak havoc on the country even after the conflict has ended. The Syrian infrastructure was already “inadequate and outdated” according to [Nationsencyclopedia.com](https://www.britannica.com/entry/syria).

But this isn't all. During the war, much of the infrastructure within the country has been damaged by bombings or artillery shelling. This makes it harder for food to be transported within the country and for humanitarian aid to be delivered to those that desperately need it. Some areas don't even have access to water and electricity. The World Bank estimates that in early 2017, a third of the housing stock and about half of educational and medical facilities were destroyed.



Both sides of the conflict have deliberately targeted civilian areas and infrastructure in their war efforts. Some schools have been taken over by warring parties to be used as military bases. These efforts further damage the already weak infrastructure and as the war isn't over, will surely put more lives at risk and make it harder and harder for humanitarian aid to be sent to the people in need.

THE CONSEQUENCES ON HUMAN RIGHTS

“Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope. It is a tool for daily life in modern society. It is a bulwark against poverty, and a building block of development, an essential complement to investments in roads, dams, clinics and factories.” (Kofi Annan).

The World Food Program does not only look at hunger, it also tries to implement human rights wherever it operates. This includes gender equality, right of education, etc. In Syria, human rights are being breached daily and whilst addressing the humanitarian crisis, there should also be talks about the other rights of the citizens.

As talked about in the part about infrastructure, many schools have been destroyed by the war efforts or taken over by warring parties to be used as military headquarters. This impedes on article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that everyone has the right of education. Education has great effects on future of a country, and

it is therefore important that the children of Syria get the education they require to lead a happy and stable life in the future.



The human right on security and on health are also being breached, as both parties actively seek out civilian targets. This causes the loss of many innocent lives with no real gain for either combatting parties. The Syrian government was already accused of committing crimes against human rights before the war started. According to witnesses there were people

being tortured and killed extrajudicially by the government. Furthermore, since the start of the war, the governmental forces of Syrian have been accused of using chemical attacks against the civilian populations. This goes against international law and violates human rights. The government of Syria says they don't use chemical weapons and that it is the rebels who are firing these attacks.

Not only the parties within Syria break human rights however. The coalition led by the US, which includes multiple Arab nations, has also broken human rights by attacking civilian establishments with drone attacks in the hope of fighting Islamic extremism.

MALNUTRITION

As the main focus of the World Food Program is about starvation and food supply. It is important to have at least a basic understanding of the effects of a lack of food or a lack of diversity in food.

Malnutrition means not having enough, or too much, of diverse nutrients to live healthily. In the case of Syria, were speaking of too little, which is specifically named



undernourishment. Undernourishment has many effects on people, but especially on vulnerable people such as pregnant people and young children.

If a pregnant woman does not get enough nutrients to feed herself and her baby properly, this can lead to permanent physical and psychological problems for the baby. This also happens when the child is under the age of two years. Other consequences of undernourishment are an increased vulnerability to diseases, which can lead to death, lessened energy, stunting, which means the person doesn't grow properly anymore. Some of these symptoms will be permanent and will haunt the individual for the rest of their lives.

The worst form of undernourishment is starvation. This has many consequences for the individual. Visual effects of starvation are the short height, the thin body and the swollen legs and abdomen. Most people have seen these symptoms on the TV during commercials for humanitarian aid. However, this is not the end for the suffering individual. If nothing is done, they will die a horrible and slow death.

SURROUNDING NATIONS

The surrounding nations of Syria have also felt the consequences of the civil war. Millions of Syrians have fled the country and are in refugee camps across the middle east, have settled in Northern Africa or have travelled to Europe.

Most of the displaced Syrians are still inside the country, but many of them have fled. Lebanon, an already crowded nation with a large border with Syria, has taken in over a million refugees, making a third of their population Syrian. Other countries such as Turkey have also taken in hundreds of thousands of refugees.

Whilst the war is still going, this stream isn't expected to reverse, especially not if the people in the nation are starving. Which is why it is of great importance to create stability for the people in Syria so that refugees can go back to their homes if they want without having to worry about their next meal or whether they will be able to eat at all.

PROBLEMS DEALING WITH THE HUNGER CRISIS

Currently in Syria we see that hospitals and clinics are working more than ever before. Doctors are worried about the situation. It's known that the food shortage is a big problem, it does not only affect the people, but also the hospitals and clinics. The hospitals and clinics are full and run out of their medicines. According to the Guardian the statistics are devastating: in several hospitals in Ghouta, one of the most suffering cities in Syria, a total of 68 (if not higher) patients have a severe malnutrition problem. In the same area 9,700 children were examined, from the 9,700 more than 40% (around 4000 children) had nutritional shortcoming; 200 children had moderate acute malnutrition and 80 children suffered from the worst forms of malnutrition.



A Syrian toddler is weighed in a medical examination in eastern Ghouta, where civilians are living under a government-imposed blockade. Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

One anonymous aid official said: "The supplies are very low, and if it continues more kids will die," and also the media makes us aware of the problems with the children in Syria by for example posting pictures of malnourished thin little children. However, it is important to not forget other groups of people who endure pain too. For instance, we see that pregnant

mothers are dealing with a lot of complications and likewise new mothers have a hard time breastfeeding their children, as they are undernourished themselves. Furthermore, working men cannot work efficiently because of a lack of energy.³

HEALTHY FOOD

It is important when dealing with the starvation crisis in Syria to take in consideration that malnutrition for example is a broad concept. It is a fact that people only tend to talk about the problem, which proclaims that certain people in certain areas do not have enough food -- which is indeed very true. However, it is also a fact that - we - should be speaking adequately with the correct terms. In this context we speak of malnutrition. Malnutrition occurs when a person has a diet in which he/she has either too much or not enough of specific nutrients. When one has too many of a certain nutrient it is logically known as overnutrition -- which can ultimately result into obesity. In Syria on the other hand, there is an increasing development of undernutrition -- which is exactly opposite of overnutrition. The opposite in which people lack nutrients or could even starve to some extent.

In the current situation in Syria we speak of starvation. Starvation means: 'the state of having no food for a long period, often causing death', according to the Cambridge dictionary. This problem was caused by the great rise in prizes in Syria. In addition, a lot of people are living right now in hard- to- reach areas. According to the World Food Program, already 3 million are living in these hard- to- reach areas. For these people to get enough food is even more difficult. This situation in combination with the rise in food prizes causes a lot of problems for the inhabitants. As the food supply is very low, the prizes are only rising more and more. Eating meat and drinking milk are examples of foods and drinks that are of great significance for a human to function well on a daily basis, however for a great amount of people the prizes of meat and milk are getting too expensive.

EXISTING ASSETS

According to The World Food Programme, it has already donated for over \$ 1.3 billion as a respond to the Syrian war crisis to support Syrian refugees. This is done by providing food, e-cards and vouchers to the Syrians who are in need of food and medical resources. The WFP has also provided food assistance for the vulnerable and conflict- affected Syrians. This programme is meant for up to 4.5 million people, who all receive a food package including food such as pasta and rice for example. The food should provide people enough for 1.700 kcal per day for a month.

However, the WFP does not only provide assistance in the form of food, it also implements activities to explain the importance of healthy food for the most vulnerable part of the society (e.g. pregnant women, nursing women and young children below the age of five). This is done to counteract more cases of (severe) malnutrition. In addition, activities are held to make people aware of the fact that restoring livelihoods should also be one of the main

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/23/syria-shocking-images-of-starving-baby-reveal-impact-of-food-crisis>

goals. Lastly, the WFP supports children education by setting up the School Meals Programme. This school year the WFP aims to have 650.000 children attending this program, where they can catch up on classes and where parents are encouraged to buy healthy food by so- called cash- based- transfers.^{4 5}

BLOC POSITIONS

AFRICA

Although most of Africa has no interests in the outcome of the civil war in Syria, some nations do. A couple of North-African nations have taken in thousands of refugees from Syria and the outcome and the current situation will affect these refugees and thus also the nations in question.

Other African nations are themselves struggling with hunger and starvation and might not be willing to spent too much of their capital or of their resources in helping a country half a world away that might be plunged into chaos the very next year.

Furthermore, the African nations will need to choose a strategy in the talks. Will they stay neutral and objective? Will they side with one of the existing sides in the conflict in the hope of ending it with new allies? Or will they make their own side, who will work together to make a solution most favourable to their interests? Those are some of the choices the delegates of the African nations will need to make when attending the conference.

ASIA

Most of Asia has been able to stay out of the conflict in the Syria. Apart from the nations in the middle east, no nations are deeply infested in the conflict and have no national gains from it.

This means that the country has to decide its allegiance in the debate. It could choose to stay neutral, as most nations have, or, depending on economic ties and geographical locations, it could choose a side.

This might seem like a small choice, as they are not in the conflict themselves, but political alignment is a great deal in the world of geopolitics. Every nation has different interests and different goals and as a representative of your nation, the delegates must decide what path is best to take in the treacherous game of global politics.

Nations also need to think about whether they have the resources to help in such undertaking and if they are willing to spend many resources and much money on helping the people in Syria.

The Arabian nations are a lot closer to the conflict and most have an interest in the outcome. Whether a nation is are Sunni of Shia, whether it is a neighbour or not and whether their interests align have great impact on the choice to make. Some nations are already in a coalition against the Syrian government and might not be willing to help them stabilize.

<https://www1.wfp.org/countries/syrian-arab-republic>

https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/d2d464e9bbb34057a41485c06d92a62c/download/?_ga=2.141345522.1708689565.1543785964-625155697.1543785964

Furthermore, these Arabian nations must think of the consequences of stabilizing region such as the region controlled by the Kurds. This could lead to a new Kurdish state in the region.

LATIN AMERICA

Just like most of the nations in Africa and Asia, the nations of Latin America do not have any stakes in the Syrian civil war, but as with those same nations, they will need to think carefully about what decisions they will be making in regard to the issue at hand.

Most of Latin America is still developing and will need to seriously consider the amount of resources they are willing to put into the humanitarian aid. Furthermore, they also need to consider the importance to their interests that this crisis poses.

Even though they might not be personally involved, this is still the world of global politics, meaning that every decision can have a big butterfly effect. One choice can lead to great alliances years later or to animosity that will haunt the nations for decades. Therefore, the delegates of these nations have to take everything into consideration when choosing what to do in the Syrian conflict and the connected humanitarian crisis.

MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES

For states from the Middle East it could be difficult to choose a side. Most of the Arab countries are much closer or to the conflict. Some of the countries need to preserve their bonds with Syria, as they are a neighbour state. For others however this does not play a big role. Some states, think of the major Sunni states, are already supporting the Syrian opposition. As a consequence, they will not support Syria's current president and they might not put the stabilization of the country as one of their priorities. There are however other countries, such as Iran, which do support the Syrian government. These states can be for example (strategic) allies of Syria and they will support the Syrian government by for example financial aid.

In every case it is important that all these Middle East countries profit or at least do not find a disadvantage from the decisions taken.

WESTERN COUNTRIES

Multiple Western countries have already participated in direct military action against the Islamic State in Syrian territory. Some countries have even formed bonds with countries supporting the Syrian opposition. Most of the Western countries would like to see one big Western front during this war, meaning that they want one universal position in the war. As a consequence, lots of the 'smaller' Western countries will follow the opinion of the 'bigger' Western countries, such as the United Kingdom and France, but also the United States.

Remember that Western countries will always like to see something in return. So, it is crucial for them that they profit from the solution or situation in one way or another.

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