



Study Guide Historical Committee UNSC 1989



Topic A: The Afghan War

Topic B: The AIDS Crisis

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Word of Welcome

Honorable delegates of the United Nations Historical Committee,

It is with the utmost pleasure that we, Alena and Celia, welcome you to the SGMUN conference of 2022 in the Historical Committee - welcome to January 1989.

We have set the time period of this committee concretely to January 1989, which can be argued to be a significant time period for both topics that we will discuss at the conference. To put you into the political time: the Soviet Union promised to eliminate its stockpile of chemical weapons, 140 nations decided to ban chemical weapons, George H. W. Bush is inaugurated as the 41st US President, we have the first reported case of AIDS transmitted by heterosexual oral sex, 35 European nations agree to strengthen rights and improve East-West trade and the American Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan closes.

Topic A will discuss the Afghan-Soviet War and the aftermath of the Geneva Accords that occurred after the war. We chose to cover this topic as a consequence of the 2021 Taliban offensive that resulted with the messy withdrawal of US troops and their international allies in May 2021 causing a further political, social and economic crisis in the country, which is being especially destructive for girls and women. The current power hold of the Taliban in Afghanistan can be considered a cause of a chain reaction of power struggles that were established during the Afghan-Soviet War (or even during XIX century imperialism), therefore making this a particularly interesting war to revisit.

Topic B will discuss the International AIDS Crisis and the necessary “next steps” that should (have) occurred in the 1980s and 1990s. Personally, we found it interesting to revisit an international medical crisis after experiencing the international reaction to the covid-19 pandemic that is affecting us all since 2020. Additionally, we are still facing the consequences of the AIDS Crisis; in 2021 about 38 million people worldwide were living with HIV and 650,000 deaths occurred that year. Furthermore, a large impact on society remains as many misconceptions about HIV/AIDS remain as well as negative socio-economic impacts. We believe that both topics will give you great sources of debate and we are looking forward to creative solutions, constructive debate and meaningful proposals.

Should you have any questions or need any further guidance when preparing your position paper, please do not hesitate to contact us. We would be happy to hear from you and are always glad to help where it is needed.

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We look forward to meeting you all!

Yours sincerely,
Alena and Celia

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About the Committee

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 1989

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN) and is charged with ensuring international peace and security, recommending the admission of new UN members to the General Assembly and approving any changes to the UN Charters.¹

The UNSC consists of fifteen members, of which five are permanent: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States. However, in the case of our UNSC, Russia will be substituted with the Soviet Union as the Soviet Union held the UNSC seat from the 24th of October 1945 to the 24th of December 1991, which was then transferred to the Russian Federation following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.²

Each member of the UNSC has one vote. Under the Charter, all Member States are obliged to comply with Council decisions.

¹<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/main-bodies>

²<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states/russian-federation>

TOPIC A: The Afghan War

Introduction to the topic

On Christmas Eve 1979 the Soviet Union started its plan to invade Afghanistan, with whom it has a southern frontier.

The operation started by air-dropping elite troops into the main cities in the country, then proceeded to enter the country with motorized divisions from their shared borders. A few days after the KGB poisoned the president and the ministers which were key to launching a Moscow-backed coup with Babrak Karmal as the new puppet president of the country. This invasion led to nine years of civil war in which 1 million civilians died and around 125.000 combatants from both sides.

In 1988 the Geneva Accords were pacted between the involved parts, Afghanistan and Pakistan, with the backing of the Soviet Union and the United States of America. This committee has to focus on the correct implementation of those accords under the surveillance of the UN. It is key that we focus on how to safely carry out what already has been endorsed by all parties.

Key definitions/concepts

The Great Game

The political and diplomatic rivalry and, sometimes, conflict that happened during the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century between the British Empire and the Russian Empire. This confrontation happened over the territories of Afghanistan and nearby territories in Central and South Asia. The UK was in fear that Russia wanted to invade India while Russia feared that the British wanted to increase its power in Central Asia, for the UK it was a priority to protect India. Although there were several plans during the 19th century to invade India by the Russians, most historians agree that there was no serious interest in India after 1801.

Mujahideen

It is an arabic term that broadly refers to people who engage in the in jihad, interpreted in a jurisprudence according to Islam as the fight for God. Talking about this topic we will use this word to reference the guerrilla-type militant groups led by the Islamist Afghan fighters in the Soviet–Afghan War.

The Prague Spring

The Prague Spring was a period of political instability with mass protests in Czechoslovakia brought about by a spell of liberalisation against the communist regime.

Brezhnev Doctrine

The 'Brezhnev Doctrine' was Leonid Brezhnev's, the Soviet leader, response to the chaos caused by the Prague Spring in 1968. This stated that each socialist country had to aid other socialist countries in case the political regime was at risk.

Guerrilla warfare/tactics

Guerrilla warfare is a form of irregular warfare in which small groups of combatants, such as paramilitary personnel, armed civilians, or irregulars, use military tactics including ambushes, sabotage, raids, petty warfare, hit-and-run tactics, and mobility, to fight a larger and less-mobile traditional military.

Sphere of Influence

A territorial area within which the political influence or interests of a nation are paramount.

The policy of Containment

US policy focused on stopping the spread of communism, particularly from the USSR.

Historical Background

During the 19th century Afghanistan became a geopolitical key in what is known as “The Great Game”. It was the worry that the Russians could get to the most significant territory in the British empire that the British fought three wars in Afghanistan during its expansion in Asia. To understand the conflict that we are tackling we must understand that Afghanistan is a colonialy imposed state structure in the beginning of the 1890s. The state was heavily subsidized by the British empire, concretely subsidized by the colonial government in India, being under its sphere of influence for the majority of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

Even after the Russian Revolution and the liberation of India, Afghanistan kept its position as a geopolitical objective to Russia which continued well through the Cold War. When in 1919 Afghanistan achieved independence in foreign policy the Soviet Union was the first country to establish diplomatic relations with them and it was one of the first countries to recognize the Bolshevik government. During the following decades, the USSR offered economic and military aid to the country. In the 1920s there were several attempts to westernize the country with the response of a rising opposition to the state by islamist ethnic and tribal groups; this prompted the downfall of the Afghan monarchy in 1929. The monarchy was reinstated in 1930 with the assistance of the British Government of India. The two following decades Afghanistan adopted some eurocentric changes into their state such as the modernization and expansion of its armed forces.

During the first three decades of the Cold War the Afghan Government received economic and military aid from the USSR and economic assistance from the US, the latter following a policy of containment in the country. With international help the state started modernization projects in several areas such as education, communication and industrialization. But all of that required a closer relationship between the center and the periphery of the country.

In 1973, Afghanistan’s last king was dethroned by a coup led by his cousin and brother-in-law, Mohammed Daoud Khan, who established the republic. Soon the USSR realized that this new turn to the left wasn’t convenient for them as Daoud Khan was far more authoritarian as it showed in his declaration to Leonid Brezhnev “Afghanistan shall remain poor, if necessary, but free in its acts and decisions”(McGee, 2022). In 1978, the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) overthrew Daoud Khan in what became known as the Saur Revolution. The president and 18 of his family members perished.

Afghanistan’s Communism in Power

The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) was the governmental system implemented after the Saur Revolution in 1978 founded by the PDPA. Babrak Karmal was initially named the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the DRA, and he worked closely with the Soviets to maintain control over a nation razed by violence and rebellion. Although they intended to transform Afghanistan into a communist state, they lacked the time and citizen support in order to do that. Thus this regime was divided and unstable, especially as it faced cultural resistance from the conservatives and religious leaders. This defiance was especially prevalent in the countryside because of the radical agrarian reforms.

The PDPA was deeply divided between two factions, namely the People's (Khalq) Party and the Banner (Parcham) Party. Hafizullah Amin, leader of the Khalq faction, orchestrated an internal coup inside the PDPA which gave way to a brief and brutal reign. During his short but barbarous reign, national unrest soared and Moscow's pressure on the country intensified. Afraid that Afghanistan may turn to the US, the PDPA support alerted Moscow to act quickly.

The USSR enforced the Brezhnev doctrine militarily. The invasion started on the 24th of December in a massive military airlift with 280 aircrafts and three divisions of 8,500 men each. The resistance of those loyal to Amin was fierce but short lived.

The 27th of September Babrak Karmal (who had been exiled from the Marxist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan) was recognized as the new leader of the country. The resistance was especially strong in the countryside where the mujahidin saw the soviets (who were christians or atheists) as a threat to Islam and its traditions.

Soviet Invasion & War

The USSR shared the southern border with Afghanistan, after years of playing in the diplomatic field decided to finally take the country's reins by intervening militarily.

On Christmas Eve 1979 the Soviet Union started its plan to invade Afghanistan, with whom it has a southern frontier.

The Russian troops quickly took over the government and all-powerful institutions in the country and most part of the territory.

One of the factors that the Soviets had not predicted is that the weather conditions were very different to what their equipment were designed for, which caused complications that had not been foreseen.

At midnight of Christmas, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan via a massive military airlift into Kabul with 280 transported aircrafts and three divisions of 8,500 men each. The elements of the army loyal to Hafizullah Amin were fierce but their resistance was brief.

The problem for the Soviets came in the countryside. The resistance was cutthroat when they ventured outside of their strongholds. The resistance saw this as religious war, in their perception the soviets, who were atheists with their Christian allies were defying Islam and their traditional culture.

The Mujahideen employed guerrilla tactics against the Soviets, which caused great destruction without open field battles where the soviets would dominate. The weapons were provided mainly by the United States that saw supporting the islamist radicals as a way to fight Russia in the international game of the Cold War, they also took the weapons left behind by the Soviets.

The most significant shift of the war was in 1987 when the US gave the rebels shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles (Stingers), which allowed them to shoot down Soviet planes and helicopters quite regularly.



This changed the balance of the war so far and the demoralization of the troops, that the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev decided that it was time to retire from the country. With no victory in sight the armed forces started withdrawing.

Consequences of the war

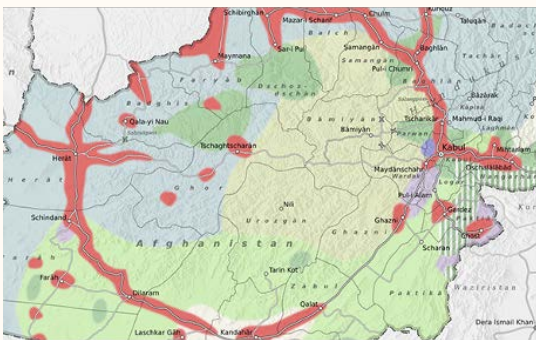
Consequences in the tide of the Cold War

This war is seen, historically, as a very significant point where the strength of the two superpowers was tested against each other indirectly.

The prestige and economy of the Soviet Union were greatly damaged by the war. The military costs are believed to be one of the reasons for the collapse of the union. It was a humiliating loss for them and it is often referred to as Russia's Vietnam.

The accords of Geneva were seen as a win for the US, thus being another argument in favor that they were winning the Cold War.

Consequences for Afghanistan



The immediate consequences of the war were noticeable for Afghanistan. The estimates suggest that one million civilians were killed as well as 90,000 Mujahideen and 18,000 Afghan troops (BBC, 2019). The WHO estimated that the war left 1.5 million people disabled in the rural areas of the country due to the war (BBC, 2019).

It also resulted in a refugee crisis in which millions fled the country seeking refuge in Pakistan, it is calculated to be over 6 million people. Many of the refugee camps became recruitment centers for extremist Islamic groups.

The infrastructure of the country was mostly destroyed and the two main powers of the world were the main aid providers to the country for its reconstruction after the devastating consequences it had in the country.

Geneva Peace Accords (1988)

By late 1986 the USSR decided that the war was being too costly and that their well organized army had many difficulties to fight the fragmented nature of the rebel movement.

The USSR and Najibullah refused to give the Afghan rebels. But fearing the consequences of the soviet withdrawal they tried to negotiate a power-sharing agreement with the Mujahideen leader, which they refused calling it a ploy so that the PDPA could stay in power. The US then included a “positive symmetry” clause that implied that as long as the USSR aided Kabul they could do the same with the Rebels.

There were other complications during the accords. After the Soviet Union agreed to drop ors demand to form a coalition government, Pakistan insisted on the formation of a mainly rebel government, composed by insurgents and non-PDA members.

The agreement was signed in the UN headquarters situated in Geneva. Some of the most important points they agreed on include:

- mutual relations, with emphasis on non-interference and non-intervention
- declaration of international guarantees (signed by the US and the USSR)
- bilateral agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan for the voluntary return of Afghan refugees
- agreement on the interrelationship settlement of the situation regarding Afghanistan
- timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops (15 May 1988 to 15 February 1989)

An important point discussed is the backing of the US in a previous agreement (1985) that would stop the supply of arms to the Mujahideen through Pakistan when the Soviet troops retired. Gorbachev didn't approve of this move by the US but decided that retiring troops as soon as possible was more important, so they reached an "understanding" regarding this issue in which the arms supply would continue.

The Mujahideen were not a part of the negotiations nor the final accord in Geneva and thus refused to accept the terms of the agreement. This implied that although the Soviet withdrew from the country the civil war continued.

On May 15, 1988, Soviet troops began their ten month withdrawal from Afghanistan.

War on drugs

One year after the Soviet Union invaded the country Afghanistan produced 5% of the cocaine in the world. During the war, this number increased swiftly to 1,000 tons of cocaine every year. Between the 1960s and the 1970s, the demand for drugs grew far beyond the regional market. For context, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan had banned the production of opium. By the end of the 70s half of the provinces were cultivating opium poppy cultivations, many of them having to do so to maintain their livelihood due to the war. By 1989 opium had become one of Afghanistan's leading exports and a third of all the opium produced in the world was from Afghanistan (Hall Blanco, A. R., Coyne, C. J., & Burns, S. (n.d.)).

The production of opium is monitored by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme due to the fact that the revenues of these drugs funded the Mujahideen. Understanding the role of drugs, especially opium, in the country's economy is fundamental to helping solve the economic and structural issues in the country.

Timeline

Time	Fact
March 1979	The Soviet Union started massive military aid to the DRA (after the revolts against President Nur Mohammed Taraki's regime, caused by land and modernization reforms). The US ambassador is kidnapped and murdered. There is a small mutiny in which they massacre soviet citizens but the rebellion is quickly crushed.
September 1979	President Taraki is killed. Hafizullah Amin becomes the new CRA leader. Amin's administration requests soviet help to help fight the Mujahideen insurgency in afghanistan and neighboring countries (Pakistan, Iran and China)
12 December 1979	The Soviet politburo decides to invade Afghanistan to avoid a situation similar to the Iranian-style revolution amidst the news of secret meeting between US diplomats and Amin's government.
24 December 1979	The Russian defense minister ordered troops into Afghanistan strategically in Kabul and Herat coming from Termez and Kushka.
29 December 1979	Babrak Kamal is installed as the DRA's new leader with the support of the USSR. Amin was killed and the country was flooded with ten of thousands of troops by air and ground.
1980	Several Mujahideen groups started a wild resistance with the support of the US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. In the first months of the war the USSR deploys more than 80,000 personnel to occupy Afghanistan.

Time	Fact
June 1981 - August 1981	The Mujahideen started organizing themselves into two factions, one moderate and the other fundamentalist. The resistance becomes more effective.
1982	The United Nations general assembly calls for the withdrawal of soviet forces in the region.
1983	President Ronald Reagan welcomes Afghan fighters to the White House.
1985	Around five million afghans have been displaced by the war fleeing to neighboring countries such as Iran and Pakistan. The new soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev states that he wants to end the war, and this results in an escalation of violence and the bloodiest years of the war.
1986	The US starts providing the Mujahideen with Stinger missiles (that allows it to take down soviet helicopters and gunships) which results in an increment in violence. Karlmal is replaced by Mohammed Najibullah.
1987	Mujahideen leader Yunus Khalis visits the Oval Office.
14 April 1988	Geneva Peace Accords: Afghanistan and Pakistan sign a peace accord with the support of the USA and the USSR. The DRA, USSR, US and Pakistan sign peace accords and the Soviets begin pulling out troops.

Bloc Positions

The bloc positions of the Cold War period can generally be seen in three different groupings, namely: the US-led Western bloc, the USSR-led Eastern bloc, and the non-aligned/neutral countries. To be clear, the countries within the Eastern and Western blocs had varied degrees of autonomy to their side's superpower with some sometimes acting in opposition to their otherwise ally. The Western Bloc, in this case, falls within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (known as NATO) whereas the Eastern Bloc falls within the Warsaw Pact. Other distinctions may also be made as, for example, the world was largely split along ideological lines with communism and capitalism being in opposing camps (Blakemore, 2019). It is, therefore, your responsibility to research your country's position and clearly set this out within the position paper, though some of the countries in the committee are specifically discussed.

The Western Bloc: NATO

The Western Bloc may also be called NATO which bundled West European countries to the US and Canada. They were largely bound together as free market economies and democracies. They, moreover, actively opposed the Eastern Block, seeing them as enemies, and becoming bogged down in proxy wars; the Cold War gets its name from the fact that these enemies did not fight each other directly (Blakemore, 2019).

The Government of the UK also supported the US directly in the conflict by providing covert military assistance to the Mujahideen such as SAS military training, rifles and other military equipment.

Afghanistan is one of many proxy wars between the Western and Eastern blocs. Similar to how the Soviets and Chinese armed the Viet Cong during the Vietnam War, the US and its allies are arming the Mujahideen (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2018). The roots for the US's support of the Mujahideen is likely based in the Truman Doctrine which sought to prevent the spread of communism and protect democracies from authoritarian tendencies; this was furthered by the Reagan Doctrine which was more extremely anti-Soviet (Office of Historians, 2019). The US began supporting the Mujahideen to, in their own words, preserve their religious freedom and national sovereignty. The Soviet invasion, moreover, had upset the US by diminishing its power in the region. It is likely that the USA and its allies' support of the Mujahideen includes training, arming, and

financing the Mujahideen; through the US's support of Pakistan, this may be expanded to include sheltering Mujahideen fighters (Lumenlearning, 2019). The usual tactics of the US to destabilize any regime was to purchase foreign made weaponry, especially Soviet, to plausibly deny the involvement of the US in the conflict. The CIA purchased soviet-designed weapons from countries such as Egypt and China and transported them to Pakistan. This was an especially smart move as they were compatible with the ones captured by their Soviet-supplied enemies. This included the shoulder-carried anti-aircraft missile launchers, namely the Stinger, that helped the Mujahideen overcome the Soviet's air dominance and brought about a stalemate in the fighting with the Soviets controlling large urban centers and the Mujahideen controlling the countryside.

The United States of America

The US began supporting the Mujahideen to, in their own words, preserve Afghan religious freedom and national sovereignty. The US developed a sophisticated insurgency against the government led by Islamic Religious leaders and supported a mountain tribesman type warfare.

The main strategy that the US had in Afghanistan was to stop the Soviet Union from having too much power in the region. In practice this meant that they wanted to prevent the USSR from launching aggressive actions in the region. While Afghanistan itself was of little importance for the US the Persian Gulf was strategically crucial.

Until the fall of the Shah of Iran in 1979 the power balance that the US had in South Asia was of their liking. When 10 months later the soviet troops entered Afghanistan, putting the soviet army near Pakistan and Iran, the US considered that the balance in power had shifted. The Soviet influence over Kabul was suddenly described by the White House as „the gravest threat to world peace since World War II.“ The Congress passed a resolution that called for „effective“ US material aid for the rebels „in their fight for freedom from foreign domination.“

It is important to remark on the influence of domestic politics for this precise conflict. When in 1980 Reagan won the elections it implied the end of the negotiation track with the USSR. The “Reagan Doctrine” was an aggressive initiative designed to increase the cost of Russia's support to foreign countries. Reagan and his advisors hoped that the Soviet troops would be tied to the Hindu Kush mountains so the cost would become unbearable for them.

A key piece of the US's strategy was Pakistan, which was led since 1977 by Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq and was the base from where the rebels launched their operations. The Carter Administration had cut aid to Pakistan in 1977 due to concerns about its nuclear program and General Zia's disdain for human rights and democracy. There was ample evidence to suggest that Pakistan was actively developing an atomic bomb. The human rights concerns of the US weren't a priority when leading the power battle with the USSR. Literally days after the Soviet invasion, Carter was on the telephone with Zia offering him hundreds of millions of dollars in economic and military aid in exchange for cooperation in helping the rebels. Zia accepted this quid pro quo, but his government remained wary of Washington's stated commitment to protect Pakistan from possible Soviet strikes across its border. During the Reagan administration the dictator, who was still interested in owning nuclear weapons and refused to make elections, became a “fighter for freedom”.

The strange unity in Congress regarding Afghanistan guaranteed an aid program that was not granted to other countries in similar human rights situations.

The dislocation of 3 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan—one of the most tragic results of the war—was something Congress, the White House and the international community could all agree on: they needed massive assistance. Ultimately one-third of Afghanistan's pre-war population fled the country, testifying to the destruction and chaos caused largely by heavy Soviet/Afghan government aerial bombing. The Us contributed huge amounts of money to their preferred NGOs and the United Nations High Commissioner for the Refugees. At

the end no matter who provided the humanistic relief many of the resources ended up in the hands of rebels that used it as political leverage against Afghans.

The US also played a biased media campaign during the totality of the conflict.

One of the main interests of the US in the region was to control the increase in opium production.

The Eastern Bloc: Warsaw Pact

The Eastern Bloc is united under communism and the USSR, which is the widely acknowledged protectorate of communism. The USSR militantly maintains communism across the world. This is best exemplified with the Soviet intervention in Hungary and Czechoslovakia and in 1956 and 1968 wherein they put down counter revolutionaries and reactionaries.

The roots of the Soviet intervention into Afghanistan was the breaking apart of the People's Democratic Party with its deep internal divisions between the People's (Khalq) Party and the Banner (Parcham) Party (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2018). The Soviet's stepped in to protect the Banner Party and return stability to Afghanistan, but they ultimately became bogged down into a stalemate in Afghanistan from which the Soviet's will now withdraw from Afghanistan in accordance with the Geneva Peace Accords. The Soviets have long had the Afghans people's interests at heart, providing most of the 80% of Afghans GDP from international trade, but ultimately withdrew with the realization of their waning popularity (United States Institute of Peace, 2018). The new Soviet leader, Gorbachev, insisted on reaching new agreements with countries in matters of political and economic reforms; Afghanistan was not an exception to this new policy and the USSR made clear that their support was 'limited'.

The wider Eastern Bloc position on the Soviet intervention is more complicated. After the Czechoslovakian invasion of 1968, the Soviets seemed to have imposed an entente with destalinization (Burger, E. S. 1983). This entente saw a new social contract between the Eastern European states and the USSR with social contract being that limiting of the Eastern European states autonomy in exchange for increasing living standards, but the Soviet's are much less willing to bear the economic brunt thereof especially considering the long-standing war in Afghanistan (Burger, E. S. 1983). "The phrase 'No more Chiles' is illustrative of the Soviet desire to aggressively avoid embarrassing setbacks in the Third World" although the debacle of Afghanistan is yet another Chile in the eyes of the Soviets and their allies, thus raising questions of the Soviet ability to protect the Warsaw Pact and communism (Burger, E. S. 1983). Aside from Romania, the Warsaw Pact is by-and-large supportive of the Soviet's actions in Afghanistan.

Russia

The interests of Russia have varied during the last century. Starting with the Great Game, the Russian Federation has considered Afghanistan an essential part of its foreign policy due to its strategic geopolitical position. In the 1907 Anglo-Russo convention Afghanistan became a "buffer" state.

During the Cold War, Afghanistan became a hot spot between the two blocs. Since the start of the Cold War Russia has been the main investor in the country.

In the late 1970s Russia started a more interventionist policy when they established a socialist pro Soviet government.

Following the sovietization of the country, islamic revolutionaries started creating issues for the USSR, which caused the soviet military intervention of the country.

The decision to pull out of Afghanistan in late 1986 was not only due to the difficulty of battling, such as guerilla military tactics, but also because of the lack of popularity of the war. Apart from the severe mental health issues and political insurgence amongst the men that returned from Afghanistan, the public opinion was concerned with the amount of roubles that were being invested in a foreign war instead of the crumbling Soviet economy.

When Gorbachev reached power, the strategy of the USSR regarding the Third World countries shifted. The fact that a great share of those countries' GDP came from international hwas no longer accepted, so Gorbachev insisted on reaching new agreements with countries in matters of political and economic reforms. Afghanistan was no exception to this new policy and Russia made clear that their support was "limited".



Neutral

The last grouping is much more diffuse in membership and positioning with some countries opposing the Soviets, some supporting, and the majority being not-involved although ultimately they are bound together by not being part of the Eastern or Western Bloc. It's also important to realize that the ideological basis of society and governance, be it communism or capitalism, is not determinant within this blocto their support or oppose the Soviet invasion. This is best seen with the People's Republic of China, which opposed the Soviet invasion and supported Mujahideen and Maoist rebels in Afghanistan despite being a communist regime themselves.

Pakistan

Pakistan refused to be a pawn in the US game and made sure to use the aid (now it was the third country in the world that received most US aid) to implement its own agenda. Although Zia spoke in concert with US objectives of supporting Afghan „self-determination“ and opposing the Afghan „puppet“ government, he and his military had their own agenda in Afghanistan.

Zia favors the more radically Islamic rebel groups who, in some cases, were no more popular or representative than the PDPA. He was able to divert a disproportionately large share of US.-supplied weapons to these groups, especially the most radical one, Hizb-i Islami (Hekmatyar). Later in the war, this would cause significant problems for the rebel movement.

United Nations intervention

The UN officials pursued a diplomatic end to the crisis since the beginning of the war. The UN Secretary-General tasked Diego Cordovez to mediate in the conflict. During the next years Cordovez flew back between New York, the South of Asia, the Soviet Union and Geneva. His objective was to make all parties agree to the withdrawal of the Soviet military under some commonly agreed conditions.

Cordovez brought Pakistani and Afghan government representatives to Geneva numerous times to discuss conditions for a political settlement. Since Pakistan did not recognize the Afghan government as legitimate authority, Cordovez had to move back and forth between hotel rooms because Pakistani officials refused to sit at the same table with the DRA representatives. Although there have been several times where the accords seemed to be near closing, some of the parts pulled out of it at the last minute, which is suspected to be influenced by the interests of Washington and Moscow.

Topic B: The AIDS Crisis

Background

What is HIV/AIDS?

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. If HIV is not treated, it can lead to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). HIV attacks the body's immune system, specifically the white blood cells - CD4 cells. These CD4 cells are destroyed by HIV, weakening a person's immune system against infections, such as tuberculosis, fungal infections, bacterial infections and some cancers.³ While AIDS cannot be transmitted from one person to another, HIV can.⁴

Where did HIV come from?

HIV/AIDS is zoonotic in nature, meaning the virus was passed to humans from animals. In the case of HIV, it was passed onto humans by a virus carried by chimpanzees, which were hunted for food.⁵ To date, the earliest known case of HIV infection in human blood is a sample taken in 1959 from a man who died in Kinshasa in what was then the Belgian Congo and is now the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁶

What are the causes of an HIV infection?

HIV is found in the bodily fluids of an infected person; these fluids include semen, vaginal and anal fluids, blood and breast milk. As it is considered a fragile virus, it does not survive outside the body for long periods. Furthermore, HIV cannot be transmitted through sweat, urine or saliva. One can get (or transmit) HIV through having anal or vaginal sex without a condom, sharing needles, syringes or other injecting equipment and can transmit HIV from mother to baby during pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding.⁷

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of HIV and AIDS vary depending on the phase of the infection. Primary or acute infection may develop within two to four weeks after the virus enters the body and often comes with flu-like symptoms. Possible signs of these symptoms include fever, headache, rash, muscle and joint pain, sore throat, swollen lymph glands, weight loss, cough and night sweats. These symptoms often remain mild; however, the viral load in the bloodstream is high and will spread quickly, leading to a clinical latent infection or chronic HIV. Once this stage is surpassed, the virus will continue to multiply and destroy the patient's immune cells leading to a symptomatic HIV infection - the previously mentioned symptoms will develop mildly or sometimes chronically and can also cause thrush, herpes zoster and pneumonia. If HIV remains untreated it will develop into AIDS as the patient's immune system has been severely damaged. Additionally, opportunistic infections or cancers can develop as the immune system is no longer capable of fighting them off.⁸

³https://www.who.int/health-topics/hiv-aids#tab=tab_1

⁴<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hiv-and-aids/>

⁵<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/etiology-hiv>

⁶<https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/2017/12/world-aids-day>

⁷<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hiv-and-aids/>

⁸<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/hiv-aids/symptoms-causes/syc-20373524>

HIV/AIDS knowledge at the beginning of 1989

By 1989 it was clear that everyone was at risk of being infected by HIV; however, the medical conditions of HIV/AIDS were still accompanied by a social context of shame, fear and prejudice. In 1987, the research found that 15% of AIDS patients survive at least five years from their diagnosis⁹ and by 1988, scientists studying macrophages (white blood cells) were beginning to find answers to how HIV invades the body and causes the disease.¹⁰ Consequently, one can already see an initial development in the knowledge of HIV/AIDS both in the scientific world as well as amongst society.

Timeline

1981

In 1981, there were 270 reported cases of a severe immune deficiency among gay men in the US, 121 of whom had died by the end of the year. Initially, the illness was named GRID or Gay-Related Immune Deficiency by researchers, thus wrongly perceiving AIDS as being only limited to men.¹¹ Additionally, a rare cancer was seen, which was presented as purple spots on the skin and very swollen lymph nodes. It was later learned that this particular type of cancer, Kaposi's Sarcoma is an "AIDS-defining condition" that marks the transition of HIV into its later stages.¹²

1982

In 1982, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) first used the term AIDS. The first infant with AIDS was reported who had received blood transfusions,¹³ as well as the first reported case in Africa.

1983

In 1983, the US Congress passed the first bill that included funding for AIDS research and treatment; however, for many, it was still difficult to understand AIDS. Joseph A. Sonnabend, a physician and AIDS researcher was threatened with being evicted from his building in New York City for treating AIDS patients - thus being the first AIDS discrimination lawsuit.¹⁴ The World Health Organisation (WHO) held its first meeting to assess the impact of AIDS globally and began with international surveillance.¹⁵

1984

Both San Francisco and New York began to close bathhouses due to high-risk sexual activity occurring. Additionally, the CDC reported that IV drug users shouldn't share needles.¹⁶ Even though the existence of HIV was discovered to be the cause of AIDS, the stigma about homosexuality and intravenous drug use negatively affected the public's perception of the disease. Consequently, many gay men hid their health struggles in their fear of being further marginalised by society.¹⁷

⁹<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/national/science/aids/timeline80-87.html>

¹⁰<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/national/science/aids/060788sci-aids.html>

¹¹<https://www.apa.org/pi/aids/youth/eighties-timeline>

¹²<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/was-first-major-news-article-hivaids-180963913/>

¹³<https://www.apa.org/pi/aids/youth/eighties-timeline>

¹⁴<https://www.apa.org/pi/aids/youth/eighties-timeline>

¹⁵<https://www.kff.org/global-health-policy/timeline/global-hivaids-timeline/>

¹⁶<https://www.apa.org/pi/aids/youth/eighties-timeline>

¹⁷<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/was-first-major-news-article-hivaids-180963913/>

1985

President Ronald Reagan first uttered the name of the disease in September in response to a reporter's questions brought up at a news conference. The first International AIDS Conference was held in Atlanta, hosted by the US, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and WHO. Furthermore, at least one HIV/AIDS case was reported from each region of the world, the first HIV case is reported in China.¹⁸ Rock Hudson was the first public figure to announce that he has AIDS.

1986

CDC reports that African-Americans and Latinos were disproportionately affected by AIDS, especially children, who made up 90% of AIDS cases in the US.¹⁹ Antiretroviral drug zidovudine (AZT), the first drug used to treat HIV/AIDS began clinical trials. The first HIV cases were reported in Russia and India and the 2nd International AIDS Conference was held in Paris, France.²⁰

1987

The FDA approved AZT and the US Congress approved \$30 million in emergency funding to states for the drug. In the Spring of 1987, Ronald Reagan gave a significant speech about AIDS, by then the disease had already affected over 36,000 Americans, of whom around 20,800 had died.²¹ Princess Diana was also photographed shaking the hand of a patient living with HIV in a London hospital. She was a significant advocate for people living with HIV and broke down barriers. AIDS became the first disease to be debated on the floor of the United Nations General Assembly, which designated the WHO to lead the effort to address AIDS globally - consequently, the WHO launched a global programme on AIDS. The AIDS Support Organization (TASO) was formed in Uganda.²² The US issued a travel ban for foreign tourists who are HIV-positive.

1988

WHO reported an AIDS increase of 56% worldwide; UNAIDS reported the number of women living with HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa exceeds that of men. The 4th International AIDS Conference is held in Stockholm, Sweden and the International AIDS Society (IAS) forms. The WHO first declares World AIDS Day on the 1st of December.²³



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¹⁸<https://www.kff.org/global-health-policy/timeline/global-hivaids-timeline/>

¹⁹<https://www.apa.org/pi/aids/youth/eighties-timeline>

²⁰<https://www.kff.org/global-health-policy/timeline/global-hivaids-timeline/>

²¹<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/04/full-story-nancy-reagan-and-aids-crisis/618552/>

²²<https://www.kff.org/global-health-policy/timeline/global-hivaids-timeline/>

²³<https://www.kff.org/global-health-policy/timeline/global-hivaids-timeline/>

²⁴<https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2022/may/19/fiasco-audible-podcast-docuseries-aids-crisis>

The stigma around HIV and AIDS

As HIV spread amongst the American population, as well as the world, discrimination against people living with AIDS, was very common as well as discrimination towards gay men. Both gay activists and HIV-positive individuals battled against job, school and housing discrimination.²⁵ Furthermore, the far right were using HIV/AIDS to continue pushing their homophobic agenda, using words like “punishment” and “sin” as a justification for HIV/AIDS amongst gay men in order to isolate an already isolated community further.²⁶

HIV/AIDS impact on safer sex

“How to Have Sex in an Epidemic: One Approach” is a 1983 manual by Richard Berkowitz and Michael Callen to advise men who have sex with each other about how to avoid contracting the virus that causes AIDS. It was one of the first publications to recommend the use of condoms to prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and is considered to be (along with “Play Fair”) one of the foundational publications of modern safe sex. Prior to the AIDS epidemic, condoms were mostly advertised and used for the prevention of pregnancies and were therefore not considered to be viable safe sex or STD prevention tool amongst the LGBTQ+ community or in general amongst society. Consequently, the manual began to raise awareness for safe sex and initiated an increase in safe sex education and implementation.

Actions taken so far

With its introduction in 1987, AZT became the first drug approved to treat AIDS. However, the drug only seemed to slow the progress of the disease and did not cure it or prevent death. Patients were prescribed an AZT pill every four hours, day and night.

Significant Organizations

Gay Men’s Health Crisis (G.M.H.C.)

In 1982 the GMHC was officially established after an informal meeting in 1981, where 80 men gathered in writer Larry Kramer’s apartment to address the “gay cancer” and raise money for research. An answering machine in the home of GMHC volunteer Rodger McFarlane acted as the world’s first AIDS hotline and received over 100 calls in the first night. By the end of its first year, GMHC produced and distributed 50,000 free copies of its first newsletter to doctors, hospitals, clinics and the Library of Congress and created a buddy program to assist people with AIDS with their day-to-day needs. Other early actions included the publishing of safer sex guidelines, the world’s first million-dollar AIDS fundraiser and the first AIDS Walk in New York in 1986.²⁷

International AIDS Society (IAS)

In 1988, the non-profit organization IAS was founded with a mandate to organize the International AIDS Conference. Initially, with its headquarters in Stockholm, the IAS signaled a new multidisciplinary style of collaboration, uniting experts from around the world to accelerate the scientific progress against HIV.²⁸

²⁵<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/modern-us/1980s-america/a/emergence-of-the-aids-crisis>

²⁶<https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2022/may/19/fiasco-audible-podcast-docuseries-aids-crisis>

²⁷<https://www.gmhc.org/history/>

²⁸<https://www.iasociety.org/our-history>

WHO

In November 1983, the WHO held its first meeting to assess the global AIDS situation and initiated international surveillance. It was then, with the HIV virus first being isolated in the Institut Pasteur, that the global health community began to understand that HIV could also spread between everyone.²⁹

The AIDS Support Organization (TASO)

As one of the first organizations to become involved in HIV/AIDS in the late 80s, TASO began as a meeting place for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS - helping people to lead positive lives. The organization also provided free counseling, social support, limited medical care, community mobilizing, advocacy and networking. Additionally, TASO worked alongside government facilities and trained government medical personnel in HIV counseling.³⁰

Resolutions passed

The United Nations Security Council resolution 1308, adopted unanimously on the 17th of July 2000, was the first resolution to address the impact of HIV/AIDS worldwide and is therefore not relevant for this committee.

Recommendations for the Delegates

Generally, you mustn't forget when the conference is set. In January 1989, significant decisions had still to be made, notable AIDS-related deaths had not yet happened, which helped raise awareness for the disease, and the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) had not been launched. To look in the future: by 1992, AIDS became the number one cause of death for US men ages 25 to 44, and two years later it became the leading cause of death for all Americans of that age and remained so through 1995. By 2002 HIV was the leading cause of death worldwide among those ages 15-59. As you might have noticed (especially when doing your own research), the AIDS Crisis remains very US-centric so do try and look over those borders and consider those nations who were left behind, particularly those in Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa who were left behind and are still now fighting with the consequences of the disease today. If you struggle to find information of your country's position, you can have a look at the position of your country in the near future from 1989 to see and understand how your country engaged with the epidemic then and assume that this is simply a continuation of past policy.

Something that you should also be aware of, is that AIDS was very closely related to homosexuality and therefore exacerbated discrimination towards gay men. Consequently, a lot of media reports as well as government and medical actions were tainted by this perception. Additionally, by 1989 it was scientifically clear that not only gay men could be infected by the virus, but everyone could be - however, this still wasn't always prevalent in the mindset of society.

As we witnessed with the beginnings of the COVID-19 pandemic, uncertainty and fear and large driving factors for decision-making and crisis actions. This fear of the unknown was also very visible in the HIV/AIDS crisis: the lack of knowledge and understanding caused the public and the states to panic and impose poorly formulated solutions to the crisis. The stigma and lack of knowledge about HIV was carried into the 21st Century, where we still see cases that underlie these factors, such as the case of the President of South Africa who had confidently taken a shower in order to minimise the risk of contracting HIV after raping a woman who was HIV positive.³¹

²⁹<https://www.who.int/news-room/spotlight/why-the-hiv-epidemic-is-not-over>

³⁰<https://www.globalhealthdelivery.org/case-collection/case-studies/africa/aids-support-organization-taso-uganda>

³¹<https://www.ozy.com/true-and-stories/the-world-leader-who-thought-a-shower-prevented-hiv/318338/>

Don't forget: most of your parents and/or relatives will have witnessed this period. Use this opportunity to ask them how they perceived the HIV/AIDS crisis: how was it portrayed in the media? How did the government act? Did they have any concerns? This will also help in understanding the sentiments at the time

Relevant Questions

Topic A

- How can the SC help in the demilitarization of the conflict?
- How can the SC help implement the Geneva Accords?
- Which are the relations that should be established from now on between Afghanistan and Pakistan?
- How does the SC ensure that both Afghanistan and Pakistan will remain sovereign countries not bending to the demands to third countries?
- How should the UN help restructure the country?

Topic B

- What is your country's current situation? How affected is it?
- What measures should be taken that HIV/AIDS doesn't continue to spread?
- How can those affected be aided?
- What measures should occur in order to stop the marginalisation and discrimination of certain groups?
- How should citizens be educated?
- How can countries work together in the battle against HIV/AIDS?

Further Reading

Topic A

- The Geneva Accords in full length

Topic B

- Newspaper archives: <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/national/science/aids/timeline88-90.html> here's an example of the archives from the New York Times, but they're quite helpful in understanding the development of the crisis
- Info sheets:
https://www.nytimes.com/library/national/science/aids/kff/pdf/hiv_aids_research.pdf
- National health websites - check out their AIDS pages and find out how it developed within your country

Be mindful that a lot of resources date to the early 2000s, which can quickly change the perspective on HIV/AIDS and will alter the focus of debate.

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