



MUN BRIEFING PAPER

BORDER DISPUTES: ARE OUR MAPS CORRECT?

Hello delegates, my name is Archie Fergusson and along with my co-chair Finn Lindo-Dunn we will be co-ordinating the political debates. This is the first time chairing for both of us, and my third ever MUN conference. I know that I can speak on behalf of Finn when I say that we're both looking forward to some lively debates on the topics we've got lined up for you this year.

We urge you to create a short position paper, about 50-75 words long, on your country's stance on the chosen topics and send them to both me or Finn (nb14ferga@edubuzz.org or nb13lindf@edubuzz.org). It is *vital* that you send us your position paper if you want to be in with a chance of winning a prize. In addition to your position paper we recommend that you create a resolution on each of the topics. You should bring these resolutions to the final debate with both an electronic (preferably USB) and paper copy. Writing a resolution paper should help you with understanding your country's stance and make the debate a thoroughly more enjoyable experience for you and everyone else.

If you have queries don't hesitate to contact us!

So, what is a border dispute? A border dispute consists of two or more countries that claim ownership over a strip of land and are in contention, through diplomacy or conflict.

Border disputes, and resolving them, are very sensitive matters across the globe, especially as they can boil over into war if they are properly addressed. So, since the UN is dedicated to the preservation of world peace should they not have a duty to get involved and try and resolve border disputes in the most peaceful manner possible?

The most well known border dispute is the Israeli- Palestinian conflict, a prime example of a complex territory disagreement that has escalated and taken on a life of itself.

One of the deadliest border disputes ongoing is the Korean Demilitarised Zone (DMZ). This area, created by North Korea, South Korea, the USA and The UN to try and resolve the constant skirmishing after the Korean War in the 1950s did nothing to end the ongoing conflict. The DMZ, created in 1953, has witnessed the deaths of not only numerous Koreans but 43 Americans. There has also been extensive tunnelling under the DMZ by the North Koreans with the indication that they were going to be used as military invasion routes.



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Brief Example: The Doklam Standoff between China and India

The issue was first raised on June 16 2017 after Bhutanese government demanded China to stop building a road in the Doklam area as they believed that it violated their 1949 treaty. China claims to have no record of this treaty as China and Bhutan have always had very strained contact. Bhutan called for the support of India as after their 2007 Friendship treaty Bhutan must take guidance from India for all foreign policy affairs. On June 18th, 270 Indian soldiers moved into the area with weapons and two bulldozers to stop the Chinese construction efforts. This resulted in a passive aggressive retaliation by China where they blocked all Indian pilgrims to Kailash mansarovar. On August 15th, China and India briefly clashed resulting in a few minor injuries, the only clash of this dispute. Consequently, on August 18th, both China and India agreed to withdraw the extra troops. Although the dispute has been resolved, China still garrisons and patrols the area; they have made clear to India and Bhutan that they don't intend to continue with the road construction but will continue to exercise their sovereignty over the area.

Not every border dispute spills over into conflict, but when it does it gets a great deal of media exposure and usually creates a wave of emotional feeling in the belligerent countries. You may have heard of the Falkland Islands - a choice example of a dispute that escalated into war between the United Kingdom and Argentina and resulted in the loss of 907 lives. The 1982 conflict received regular front-page news coverage both in Britain and Argentina.

Though border disputes are often raised at the UN, it is generally impossible to resolve the dispute in a manner that does not leave some hurt feelings on one side or the other; often the bigger country with more powerful allies winning out, and the needs and desires of the residents of the territories and disputes ignored. Would it be better to have a forum in which the arguments of both sides were given equal credence; and the views of the inhabitants could be taken into account when trying to resolve these issues, and whose decisions were binding in international law?

Points to consider:

- Who should decide which side's claim is more valid?
- Does your country believe that the decision should be made by a process conducted by the U.N. or other body?



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- Or does your country believe it should be left to the disputing countries to come to an agreement through peaceful negotiation?
- How do you ensure that the countries in dispute actually participate in any process and respect its outcome?

Useful Links:

<https://www.statista.com/chart/9961/border-disputes-worldwide/>

<http://listverse.com/2011/09/02/top-10-controversial-territorial-disputes/>

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2070.html>

Country Profiles:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/country_profiles/default.stm

http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/countries_of_the_world.htm

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

For issues of current debate:

www.idebate.org

www.newint.org

www.amnesty.org