



2023 北京国际模拟联合国大会  
Beijing International Model United Nations 2023

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## Background Guide

Emergency Special Session of the  
UNGA

Topic: Joint Crisis System-Suez Canal Crisis

青年携手  命运共同

JOINED HANDS , SHARED FUTURE

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# Welcome Letter

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Emergency Special Sessions (ESS) of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGA) in Beijing International Model United Nations 2023 (BIMUN2023). We Directors of ESS would like to extend our sincerest welcome to all delegates.

Dedicated to maintaining international peace and security, the UNGA faced great challenges in 1956. As the hatred between the Arab and Jewish world kept rising, the UK and France struggled to maintain their influence in the Middle East while the US and the Soviet Union, the two rising superpowers, were trying to enter the area in a new round of competition. Meanwhile, the Hungarian Uprising in Europe also caught the attention of the US and the USSR, as the recognition of the Hungarian government was yet to be clearly established and the people of Hungary lived in uncertainty and conflict, adding more complexity and difficulty to this game.

Under such a turbulent situation, the fate of the Middle East and Hungary was at risk as the pressure on the international community continued to escalate, requiring great efforts from leaders and diplomats. Delegates in this committee will be playing the role of individuals in 1956 as delegations from Member States of the United Nations, staff of the United Nations Secretariat and other entities and organs, and media of the Joint Press Centre to discuss and negotiate over the delicate challenges about Suez Canal and Hungary, making suggestions to best restore peace and taking a firm stance of their nations' interests.

The Background Guide offers crucial information related to the topic and committee and providing delegates with the perspectives of the most concerned issues and problems. We strongly recommend delegates to conduct their own research after reviewing the Background Guide, in order to have a better grasp of the incident and a deeper understanding of certain aspects. We look forward to your outstanding performances and will see you soon!

Best Regards,

Directors of Emergency Special Sessions of the UNGA  
Beijing International Model United Nations 2023

# Introduction to the Committee

As the chief deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the United Nations, the General Assembly has been playing a central role since its establishment in 1945, providing all UN Member States with a unique forum for multilateral negotiation of international issues, covering the Charter and across the spectrum.<sup>1</sup>

The Charter of the United Nations authorises the General Assembly to make recommendations for the benefits of international peace and security, including disarmament, peaceful settlement of conflicts, and cooperation.<sup>2</sup> The Assembly may also discuss any questions on international peace and security unless the matter is currently under the discussion of the Security Council, in which scenario the Assembly shall only make recommendations.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, if the Security Council fails to exercise its primary responsibility of maintaining or restoring international peace and security due to its lack of unanimity of the permanent members, i.e., a permanent member has cast a negative vote, then the Assembly may convene the emergency special sessions apart from its regular sessions when faced with a threat to the peace within twenty-four hours of the request therefor, during which the Assembly shall consider the urgent matter and propose appropriate collective measures.<sup>4</sup>

According to the resolution 337A(V) adopted in 1950, the 1st Emergency Special Session was held during 1-10 November 1956 on the topic of the Middle East, concentrating on the Suez Crisis, with the 2nd session followed three days later during 4-10 November 1956, creating a more complicated benefits dispute.<sup>5</sup>

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1 General Assembly of the United Nations, "Forum for Multilateral Negotiation, Functions and powers of the General Assembly," General Assembly of the United Nations, Dec. 7, 2022, Accessed, <https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>.

2 General Assembly of the United Nations, "Functions and powers of the General Assembly," General Assembly of the United Nations, Dec. 7, 2022, Accessed, <https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>.

3 Ibid.

4 General Assembly of the United Nations, "Emergency Special Session," General Assembly of the United Nations, Dec. 7, 2022, Accessed, <https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/emergency.shtml>.

5 Ibid.

# Introduction to the Joint Crisis System

## I. Basic Information about the Joint Crisis System

The Joint Crisis System is an increasingly popular form of conference in Model United Nations activities nowadays. It is different from ordinary regular committees in the following three aspects:

The first is the setting of crises. The whole system will be driven by continuously emerging crises that are the concrete manifestations of events extracted by the Directors from a simulated world (Crisis Dimension) of the real world. Every crisis will be notified to the delegates concerned (all, some, or a single one of them) according to the characteristics of the event and the nature of the seats they represent). Delegate(s) will then take necessary measures to manage the crisis.

The second is the presence of a feedback mechanism. Upon emergence of a crisis, delegates will have to evaluate the situation, discuss with fellow delegates, make efficacious decisions, and eventually take swift actions to resolve the pending crisis. These actions will affect the Crisis Dimension, in which events will or will not develop further, thereby forming new events. The Directors will put forward new crises based on new events, and inform the delegates concerned through the aforementioned channels, enabling delegates to perceive the consequences of the decisions of their own and of others.

The third is connexion. The decisions made by different sub-platforms (including Conference Platform and Non-Conference Platform) will function interdependently in the same Crisis Dimension. Therefore, the actions of one sub-platform in the Crisis Dimension will, to some extent, inevitably affect those of the others. At the same time, different sub-platforms can also influence each other's decisions through consultation and negotiation between them.

For delegates, there are two differences in role-playing in a Joint Crisis System compared to regular committees. The first is the difference in conference operation mode. Delegates in conventional regular committees need to perform role-playing within the prescribed rules of procedure and realise national interests on specific issues. In the Joint Crisis System, the rules of procedure are not the main focus of the meeting. As an environment of a real simulation of the world, there will be stronger confrontation between countries in the Joint Crisis System. Delegates, therefore, should put more attention on the formulation of substantial decisions rather than the formality of discussions.

The second is the difference in the authority of delegates. In the Joint Crisis System, each Non-Conference Platform, as a decision-making body with a certain designated authority in a country's political system, will have real capacity to govern the state and interact

with other nations. However, from the perspective of conference efficiency, the Directors hope that the decisions made by delegates will stay pertinent to the issues involved, and digressive discussions during the conference, albeit in line with the mandate of each entity, will not be encouraged.

Apart from the above, there are other differences between the Joint Crisis System and other conventional committees. Such content will be mentioned in the preconference training sessions conducted by the Directors.

## II. Arrangement of Seats

The Joint Crisis System consists of the Joint Crisis Committee (JCC, Chinese) and the Emergency Special Sessions of the UNGA (ESS, English). The ESS committee has three categories of seats: Member States of the UNGA; staff of the United Nations Secretariat and other entities and organs; and media of the Joint Press Centre (English).

### a. General Assembly of the United Nations (27 seats; double-delegation)

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Australia*†   | Austria                               |
| Belgium*  | Brazil                                |
| Canada  | Colombia†                             |
| Cuba*   | Czechoslovakia                        |
| Egypt   | Finland                               |
| France*†  | Hungary                               |
| India   | Indonesia†                            |
| Iran*   | Iraq†                                 |
| Israel  | Jordan                                |
| Norway  | Peru*                                 |
| Poland  | Saudi Arabia                          |
| Syria   | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*† |
| United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland* |                                       |
| United States of America*†                            | Yugoslavia*                           |

\* Members of the Security Council in 1956<sup>6</sup>

† Members of the Credentials Committee of the tenth session of the General Assembly (members not listed above include Afghanistan and the Dominican Republic)<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Yearbook of the United Nations 1956, Appendix IV, 530, [https://www.unmultimedia.org/searchers/yearbook/page\\_un2.jsp?volume=1956](https://www.unmultimedia.org/searchers/yearbook/page_un2.jsp?volume=1956).

<sup>7</sup> UN General Assembly, Document 3027 and Corrigendum 1, Credentials of representatives to the seventh session of the General Assembly: First report of the Credentials Committee, A/3027 and Corr.1, ¶ 1 (Nov. 15, 1955), <http://undocs.org/en/A/3027>; <http://undocs.org/en/A/3027/Corr.1>.

**b. United Nations Secretariat and Other Entities and Organs (8 seats; single-delegation)<sup>8</sup>**

| Office   | Name                            | Nationality   |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Secretary-General  | Dag Hammarskjöld                | Sweden        |
| Under-Secretary Without Department   | Ilya S. Tchernychev             | USSR          |
| Under-Secretary for Political and Security Council Affairs                                     | Dragoslav Protitch              | Yugoslavia    |
| Under-Secretary for Public Information   | Ahmed S. Bokhari                | Pakistan      |
| Under-Secretary and Director of the European Office  | Adrianus Pelt                   | Netherlands   |
| Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East | Henry R. Labouisse              | United States |
| Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation in Palestine               | Major-General Edson L. M. Burns | Canada        |
| United Nations Acting High Commissioner for Refugees   | James M. Read                   | United States |

**c. Joint Press Centre (English) (8 seats; single-delegation)**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Agence France-Presse                        | Associated Press                              |
| Jewish Telegraphic Agency                   | Middle East News Agency                       |
| Press Trust of India                        | Reuters                                       |
| Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS) | Telegraphic Agency of New Yugoslavia (TANJUG) |

### III. Timeline and Starting Point

The Timeline is a unique concept in the Joint Crisis System that generally refers to a certain ratio between the pace of time passing in the Reality Dimension and that in the simulated Conference Dimension. The activation of the Timeline signals the commencement of the Joint Crisis System. The setting of the Timeline enables delegates and the Directors to know the exact time of the meeting and avoid disputes, thereby better honouring the purpose of verisimilitude.

The Starting Point refers to the historical time corresponding to the activation of the Timeline.

This committee has a fixed Timeline and Starting Point, and the Directors will notify all delegates at an appropriate time before the meeting.

<sup>8</sup> Yearbook of the United Nations 1956, Appendix II, 499, 508-510, [https://www.unmultimedia.org/searchers/yearbook/page\\_un2.jsp?volume=1956](https://www.unmultimedia.org/searchers/yearbook/page_un2.jsp?volume=1956); UN General Assembly 3rd Committee, Limited Document 393, Staff of the United Nations Secretariat: Report of the Secretary-General, A/C.5/L.393, (Sept. 28, 1956), <http://undocs.org/en/A/C.5/L.393>.



## Introduction to the Topic

As the confrontation between the US and the Soviet Union went through a decade, the international community went through a rough year in 1956. Due to the influence of the clash between colonialism and nationalism and the rivalry between two rising superpowers, the conflicts in Middle East and Eastern Europe that once lay under the surface had broken out and escalated within a fortnight from the end of October and the beginning of November, known as the Suez Crisis and Hungarian Uprising.

The two incidents entwined with each other, both of which were having profound influence on States' decisions. Under intense joint pressure in the Suez Crisis, the UK and France seemed to be siding with the angels on Hungarian Uprising. While the US and the USSR found themselves on the same side pressing the UK and France in the Suez Crisis, they had completely different positions on the Hungarian Uprising. As both incidents continuously escalated, countries need to act accordingly to their national interests and make careful decisions about their positions on the Suez Crisis and Hungarian Uprising.

| <b>Suez Crisis</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Core Contradictions in Suez Crisis</b>                                 | a. Conflicts between the Egyptian nationalism and the colonialism of the UK and France;   |
|   | b. Conflicts between Arab world and Israel;   |
|   | c. Conflicts between the US and the USSR for battling over the dominance and control over the Middle East;                          |
| <b>Problems to Be Solved in the Coming or Already Struck Suez Crisis:</b> |   |
| <b>Prior to the Outbreak of War</b>                                       | a. Avoiding further deterioration of the situation;   |
|   | b. Mediating the conflicts among Egypt and the UK and France, particularly on the ownership of Suez Canal;                          |
|   | c. Mediating the conflicts between Egypt and Israel, particularly regarding the freedom of navigation through the Straits of Tiran; |
|   | d. Building conflict-prevention, nation-reconciliation mechanisms;  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| After the Outbreak of War   | a. Immediate ceasefire, and whether a supervision mechanism should be built or a pre-existing mechanism should be applied;  |
|   | b. International law verdict: whether the incident should be defined as "invasion", and whether to enforce measures against the attacking parties, including economic sanctions, arms embargo, and the collective security mechanism; |
|   | c. Restoration of pre-war border, and whether a mechanism should be built or a pre-existing mechanism should be applied;  |
|   | d. Whether the transit through Suez Canal was blockaded, and restoring the navigation as soon as possible;  |
|   | e. Avoiding humanitarian crisis, and organising relief as soon as possible in the case that there was a humanitarian crisis;  |
|   | f. Investigation on war crimes and holding the responsible party accountable;   |
|   | g. Post-war arrangements;   |
| Possible Solutions for the Mentioned Problems:                        |   |
| The International Law Basis regarding Suez Canal and British Garrison | a. The Suez Canal Convention of 1888, The Suez Canal Base Agreement of 1954, etc.   |
| Maintaining International Peace and Security                          | b. Collective security mechanism and peacekeeping operation;  |
| Supervision on Ceasefire  | c. United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation in Palestine (UNTSO);  |
| Countering Humanitarian Crisis  | d. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Hungarian Uprising</b>   |   |
| Core Contradictions in Hungarian Uprising                                 | a. Conflicts between Hungary's hope for gaining self-control over domestic and foreign policies and the USSR's control over Eastern Europe; |
|   | b. Conflicts among the Socialist Bloc itself regarding concrete implementation of Socialism;  |
|   | c. Conflicts between the Western Bloc and Eastern Bloc's fight over dominance and control over the Middle East;                             |
| Problems to Be Solved in the Coming or Already Struck Hungarian Uprising: |   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| The Stage of Internal Turmoil in Hungary:       | a. Avoiding anarchy and humanitarian crisis;   |
|   | b. Promoting the communication between Hungary and the USSR to avoid any armed conflicts;  |
|   | c. Government recognition problem if there were multiple governments at the same time;   |
| The Stage of Soviet Forces' Entrance of Hungary | a. International law verdict on Soviet troops actions, and requiring the relevant parties to act accordingly to the international law; |
|   | b. Support for the recognised government;  |
|   | c. Avoiding humanitarian crisis, and organising relief as soon as possible in the case that there was a humanitarian crisis;           |
|   | d. Investigation on war crimes and holding the responsible party accountable;  |
|   | e. Investigation on the incident afterwards;   |
| Possible Solutions for the Mentioned Problems:  |  |
| The Legitimacy of Soviet Forces                 | a. Principle of sovereign equality of states and principle of non-intervention of internal affairs;                                    |
| Multiple Governments                            | b. Government Recognition;   |
| Countering Humanitarian Crisis                  | c. European Office of the United Nations and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).                                    |

# Background of the Suez Crisis

## I. The Colonial History of Egypt and Introduction to the Suez Canal

### a. Basic Information of the Suez Canal

Situated on the west side of the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula, the Suez Canal serves as the primary international shipping channel connecting Asia, Africa and Europe by creating artificial access from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean. In 1955, the Suez Canal reached more than twice as much traffic as the Panama Canal.<sup>9</sup> And of all tonnages handled, nearly 70 per cent normally consists of oil, amounting to a daily rate of 1.2 million barrels, which reveals its significant economic and strategic status, making it the object of contention between great powers.<sup>10</sup>

The original anticipation of the Suez Canal was to be a canal from the Red Sea to the Nile constructed by Senusret III (also known as Sesostri III), which had existed for six centuries and was discarded in the 8<sup>th</sup> century due to constant wars and invasions.<sup>11</sup>

### b. The First Period of British and French Invasion in Egypt

In 1798, Napoleon I and his mighty French fleet stormed and took over Egypt, intending to expand its global market, plundering materials and making Egypt its colony.<sup>12</sup> By the end of the 18th century, Egypt was still nominally part of the Ottoman Empire, but in practice, the power had fallen to the Mamluk mercenaries' group, who used to be slave soldiers in the service of the Arab caliphate in mediaeval times.<sup>13</sup> Under Mamluk's rule, Egypt suffered from political corruption, economic stagnation and military weakness, while Napoleon I carried out brutal colonial policies here. To gain the trust of the local people and govern them better, he pretended to propagate the bourgeois ideology of equality and fraternity and faked himself into a convert to Islam.<sup>14</sup> Politically, he obtained the top decision-making power and actively inveigled the Islamist Egyptian elites. Economically, he announced the confiscation of Mamluk's property and the annexation of two-thirds of the country to the French Republic while increasing the tax on peasants and forcing loans on merchants.

Nevertheless, Mamluk's harsh rule only turned Egypt into a country of severe economic recession and extreme poverty, leading to a wave of fanatical national movements. At that time, France and Britain were fiercely competing in the Middle East, the former wanted to

9 Michel Claude Contezac, *The Suez Crisis of 1956*, (The American University, M.A., M-272, 1961), 12.

10 Ibid, 10.

11 Ibid, 2.

12 John Howard, *The Suez Crisis 1956: a Case Study in Contemporary History* (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1976), 5.

13 Thomas Philipp & Ulrich Haarmann. *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society* (Cambridge University Press 1998), 3.

14 孙明良：《拿破仑对宗教的利用》，《山东师大学报（社会科学版）》，1998年4月，第27-31、34页。

consolidate its position within the Ottoman Empire, while the latter intended to suppress Egypt's development by supporting Turkey. In 1798 and 1800, French troops were heavily struck by Egyptian people's uprisings; and in August 1798, Turkey declared war on France with the help from Britain.<sup>15</sup> Under British mediation and facing pressure both at home and abroad, France signed the Convention of El Arish with Turkey in 1800, which requested a phased withdrawal of France from Egypt under the supervision of Turkey and its allies, handing Egypt over to Turkey. The French troops surrendered in Cairo and Alexandria in June and August 1801 and evacuated from Egypt in September, indicating the defeat of French armed aggression against Egypt.<sup>16</sup>

In 1807, the British planned on taking advantage of the chaotic Egyptian situation by supporting the Mamluk group, which was ousted by the Egyptian people led by Muhammad Ali Pasha in 1805.<sup>17</sup> However, when the British troops stepped on the Egyptian land, they experienced a violent counter-strike by the people in Rashid and were forced to withdraw from the country with failure.

To facilitate the transportation between regions and take better control of his colony, Napoleon I, when in Egypt, had thoughts of making a grand ship canal across the isthmus and urged various schemes to be proposed. However, the grand project was laid aside due to the measuring error and his hasty retreat.

### **c. Egypt Becomes the Semi-Colony of Britain and France**

The early 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the drastic contend between Britain and France competing for dominance in the Middle East. When Britain intended to restrain the development of Egypt by supporting the Ottoman Empire, France held the opposite opinion of supporting Egypt to consolidate its status within the Ottoman Empire.

In April 1839, Britain allying with Russia, Prussia and Austria, provoked the second Turkish-Egyptian War and defeated Egypt. Egypt was forced to accept unequal treaties by the great powers and became the semi-colony of Britain and France.<sup>18</sup>

In 1851, Britain gained the privilege of building the Cairo-Alexandria Railways, thus controlling Egypt's railway and telecommunication business. In 1854, Ferdinand Marie, Comte de Lesseps, a French engineer, obtained the concession from the Viceroy of Egypt of making a ship canal from Suez to Port Said on the Mediterranean. In December 1858, he established a company to carry out his plans, naming it the Suez Canal Company.<sup>19</sup> The number of shares held by each party at that time is shown in the following graph.

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15 王明美：《试析近代史时期埃及沦为殖民地的原因》，《国家哲学社会科学学术期刊数据库》，1980年，第48-49页

16 Baha Abu-Laban, "The National Character in the Egyptian Revolution", *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1967, 180.

17 王明美：《试析近代史时期埃及沦为殖民地的原因》，《国家哲学社会科学学术期刊数据库》，1980年，第48页。

18 Ibid, 49.

19 John Howard, *The Suez Crisis 1956: a Case Study in Contemporary History*, (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1976), 3.

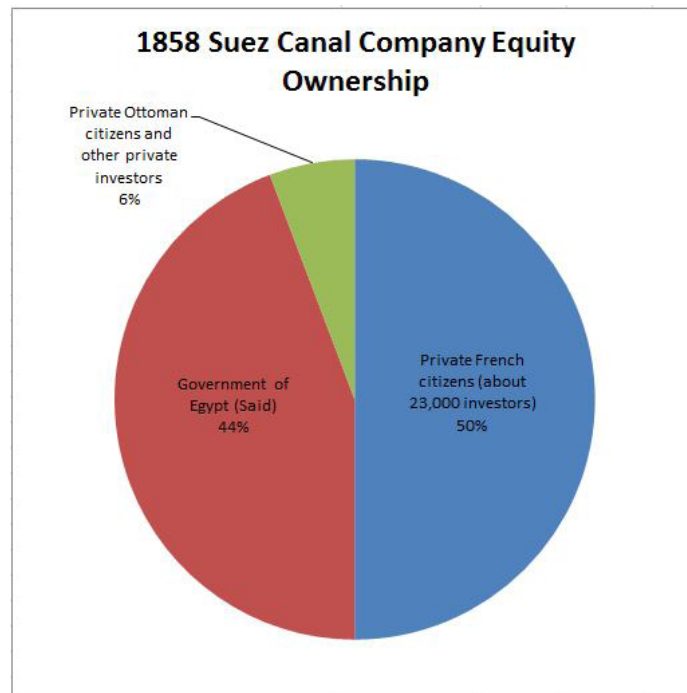


Chart 1 1858 Suez Company Equity Ownership<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, the massive cost of constructing the Suez Canal put Egypt into a fiscal crisis and heavy debts. In 1875, the British took advantage of Egypt's economic hardship and seized control of the Suez Canal Company by buying 44% of Egypt's canal shares at a bargain price.<sup>21</sup> Under the fierce competition between Britain and France, Egypt found itself caught in a difficult position.

#### d. Egypt Completely Becomes the Colony of Britain and France

Due to the colonial plunder of Britain and France and the decadent rule of the feudal class in Egypt, Egypt's foreign debt accumulated. In 1876, it reached ninety-one million pounds, which took up two-thirds of the national income to pay the interest, resulting in the financial bankruptcy of Egypt.<sup>22</sup> Britain and France seized the opportunity to take over Egypt's national finance and implemented the practice of "dual supervision". In 1878, Britain and France set up a "European Cabinet" in Egypt. The cabinet was run by Briton Rivers Wilson, the influential President of the Commission of Inquiry, who occupied a crucial post in the Egyptian Ministry of Finance. The commissioner of debts, the Frenchman Blignières, was appointed Minister of Public Works. The Austrian and Italian representatives were made controllers-general and assistants to the Minister of Finance.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Karabell, Zachary, *Parting the desert: the creation of the Suez Canal*, Alfred A. Knopf, 2003, 132-144.

<sup>21</sup> John Howard, *The Suez Crisis 1956: a Case Study in Contemporary History*, (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1976), 4.

<sup>22</sup> 王明美：《试析近代史时期埃及沦为殖民地的原因》，《国家哲学社会科学学术期刊数据库》，1980年，第49页。

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 49.

The growing aggression of the “European Cabinet” provoked a strong revolt of the Egyptian people. In 1879, Egypt's first nationalist group was founded. In February 1882, a new cabinet by that party was formed, bringing the “dual supervision system” to an end.<sup>24</sup>

When Egypt was faced with the failure of the proxy rule and the loss of colonial interests, the British and French fleets sailed into Alexandria in May 1882, bombarded Alexandria in July, seized control of the Canal zone in August, and finally occupied Cairo in September. It was not until 1922 that Britain recognised Egypt's independence but retained the right to garrison troops in the Canal zone.<sup>25</sup>

## II. Arab-Israeli Conflict

### a. The Rise of the Modern Zionism

Ever since the Jews left Palestine during the time of the Roman Empire, they have always desired to return to their homeland. In modern times, this yearning and longing had developed into Zionism, which arose at the end of the 19th century, along with an emerging anti-Semitic wave in Europe. In March 1881, the assassination of the Russian czar triggered a series of events against the Jews spreading from Russia to Eastern Europe, including robbery, deportation and massacre of the Jews. From 1881 to 1914, about 3 million Jews immigrated from Russia to Western Europe, the US, Canada and some South American countries; they were treated as outsiders and suffered from a severe identity crisis, strengthening their beliefs in Zionism.<sup>26</sup>

### b. The Rise of the Conflicts and International Attitude

Many Muslim Arabs have moved to Palestine since the reign of the Arab Empire in the seventh century. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, under the influence of Zionism, the diaspora Jews settled in Palestine in a purposefully planned and organised way. When they were peacefully and politely coexisting at the beginning stage, differences and conflicts revealed themselves after a specific time.

It was during the two World Wars when major political conflicts occurred in Afghanistan. At the end of the First World War, for its interests in the Middle East, Britain promised to establish one or several Arab states in the Arab region of the Ottoman Empire after the war. Nonetheless, after a short period, Britain started to support Zionism and claimed that the King had approved the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. This sudden change in Britain's attitude prepared the conflicts between the two nations. While the British government used military force against the Arab uprising, it also intended to win the support of the Arabs in the upcoming World War II to maintain its status in the Middle East.

24 Vladimir Borisovich Lutsky, “The Financial Enslavement of Egypt”, *Modern History of the Arab Countries*, 1969 CHAPTER XV.

25 Baha Abu-Laban, “The National Character in the Egyptian Revolution”, *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1967, 183.

26 张要红, 赵东方: 《中东阿以冲突的历史根源》, 《山西高等学校社会科学学报》, 2003年, 第72页.

During World War II, a new generation of Zionists, led by David Ben-Gurion, approached positively towards the US, who at that time strongly welcomed Jewish immigration and supported the creation of a vibrant Jewish state in appropriate parts of Palestine, leading to conflict between Britain and the United States over Palestine and injecting new tension into the situation in the region.

In November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly, after several months of investigation, discussion and debate, the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine (UN Resolution 181) was finally adopted to decide the future governance of Palestine.<sup>27</sup> It stipulated the establishment of independent Arab and Jewish states in the Palestine region after the termination of the British mandate, with Jerusalem as an independent entity administered by the United Nations. The adoption of this resolution immediately stirred strong opposition and protest in Palestine and the Middle East.

### c. The Process of the Event

On 14 May 1948, the day that drew the end of the British mandate, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the founding of the State of Israel.<sup>28</sup> The next day, Egypt, Syria and other Arab countries sent troops to Palestine, leading to the breakout of the first Arab-Israeli War. Since then, the conflict between the Arab and Jewish Peoples had evolved into a comprehensive confrontation between the Arab countries and Israel. The Palestinians lost their land and thus were exiled and became refugees. On 15 May 1948, the Arab League countries: Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon successively invaded the Palestinian and Israeli territories. The war lasted from 15 May 1948 to 20 July 1949 until the final armistice was signed, which declared the failure of the Arab countries. Through this war, Israel occupied more than five thousand square kilometres allotted to the Arab State according to the UN partition plan and occupied West Jerusalem. After the war, the Palestinian Arabs began the national liberation movement, and in May 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organisation was founded.<sup>29</sup>

## III. The Egyptian Revolution of 1952

It is believed that modern Egypt has begun since the publishing of the Declaration on 22 February 1922 by British David Lloyd Georges's government.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, before the revolution of 1952, it was like a British Commonwealth under the reign of King Farouk I. The Egyptian Revolution of 1952 (The 1952 Coup d'état) turned Egypt into a world power with its thoughts and actions.

The Wafd Party government was unpleasant with the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 (officially, The Treaty of Alliance Between His Majesty, in Respect of the United Kingdom,

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27 Ibid, 73.

28 Howard John, *The Suez Crisis 1956: a Case Study in Contemporary History*, (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1976), 194.

29 Ibid, 195.

30 Michel Claude Contezac, "The Suez Crisis of 1956," (The American University, M.A., M-272, 1961), 13.



and His Majesty, the King of Egypt), signed between Britain and Egypt on 26 August 1936, and intended to destroy the treaty at any cost.<sup>31</sup> In January 1952, Mostafa el-Nahas Pasha submitted his scheme of sabotaging the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty to the House, causing Farouk I to fear his throne being threatened. The situation was upgraded after the Battle of the Canal and the incident of Buluk Nizam.<sup>32</sup> The series of events aroused a wave of anti-British and anti-Western movements domestically, laying the ground for the revolution. Nevertheless, King Farouk did not pay enough attention to the status quo. When he was indifferent, a group of young officers were actively preparing for revenge against the British occupants, among whom there was lieutenant Gamal Abdel Nasser. Nasser had experiences of participating in revolutionary activities during World War II by collecting information about guerrilla warfare.

The domestic situation was on the edge of breakdown before the revolution. There were no policies for booming the chaotic economy or plans for handling the continuously increasing population. The detrimental prevail of excessive extravagance encouraged by feudalism, and unjust tax allocation had worsened the domestic environment and aggravated the burden of the poor.

The revolution began on 26 January as King Farouk accepted the ultimatum from General Naguib and left the country, which made faintly visible changes in Egypt society without bloodshed. The new rulers - General Naguib and a twelve-member revolution council - had adopted an indecisive attitude on foreign policies, including swinging between condemning the colonial power and seeking assistance from the West. Nevertheless, the revolution still completed the power shift from the royal and aristocratic people to the hands of the masses, the genuine Egyptians. Afterwards, the year 1953 witnessed the dissolution of old parties and the dominance of "The Egyptian Liberation Party". The Monarchy was abolished, and the Republic of Egypt was established on 18 June 1953, with General Naguib as its first president.<sup>33</sup> In 1954, a Muslim Brotherhood member tried to kill Nasser, who later cracked down on the organisation. On 14 November 1954, Nasser placed Naguib under house arrest and assumed executive office because he believed President Mohammad Naguib's revolution was not sufficiently determined. In June 1956, Nasser was officially elected president.

After the revolution's victory, the Nasser government abolished the old state mechanism, set up the "Revolutionary Steering Committee (RSC)", and promulgated the interim constitution for the transitional period. The 1952 Land Act confiscated the royal family's land and properties, relieved peasants' burdens, and encouraged agriculture production recovery. The reform of "nationalisation" in industry and commerce laid the economic foundation of the republic, preparing the new republic for the Suez Canal crisis in 1956 and the retake of the Suez Canal.

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31 Ibid, 14.

32 Ibid, 14.

33 Howard John, *The Suez Crisis 1956: a Case Study in Contemporary History*, (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1976), 476.

# The Suez Crisis

## I. Nationalisation of the Suez Canal

### a. Summary of Reasons for the Nationalisation

In the 1950s, the climax of nationalism hit the Arab world when a dozen of countries fought for independence and national security, which was seen as a tendency. For example, they pursued liberation and independence so enthusiastically at any cost that they even intentionally invited to the agreement on Baghdad Pact; they compromised for the commitment that they would not be intervened by other western countries anymore.<sup>34</sup> However, it still burst into chaos owing to the engagement of the United Kingdom in the Baghdad Pact.

Under the circumstances, Egypt, a relatively powerful class in the Arab world, was bothered for the sake of the jurisdictional conflict of the Suez Canal, which was geographically in the country but was in charge of France and exploited by Britain as well as France. Moreover, people in that area were not accustomed to Egyptian etiquette because they stuck to the western lifestyle. Naturally, the region of the Suez Canal seemed to exceed Egyptian control from various perspectives.

However, it was when Nasser, who held the belief of pragmatism, struggled to thrive in Egypt no matter what types of methods. He realised that agricultural countries would not bring prosperity in a short period, not to mention that a large quantity of water resources would be well-spent, blaming the seasonal currents. Therefore, an idea occurred when he switched his strategic eyesight from the domestic agriculture movement to fight back for deserved profit from the Suez Canal.<sup>35</sup>

At first, he came up with the idea of constructing the Aswan High Dam to utilise water resources efficiently. In seeking needed capital, Egypt was thwarted by the mean conditions that the United States of America and Britain required and the uncertainty of the Soviet Union. Although in quick succession, the Soviet Union provided a considerable number of advanced weapons at the cost of one-tenth of the charge of the United States, 80 million dollars, it was still a heavy burden to poverty-stricken Egypt.

Consequently, Nasser finally resolved to nationalise the profitable Suez Canal for domestic prosperity, national humiliation, Arab dignity and personal ambition.

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<sup>34</sup> "Baghdad Pact," *International Organization* 11, no. 1 (1957): 186–88.

<sup>35</sup> Michael C. Shupe, William M. Wright, Keith W. Hipel, and Niall M. Fraser. "Nationalization of the Suez Canal: A Hypergame Analysis," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 24, no. 3 (1980): 477–93.

## **b. Process**

On July 26, 1956, Nasser delivered a powerful, mighty, persuasive speech. He stated, "And now, while I am talking to you, your Egyptian brothers are heading to take over the Canal Company and make the Canal Company ours."

This was the first step to nationalising the Suez Canal with already enough citizens' euphoria. Afterwards, Nasser declared that the Egyptian government was to transfer whole funds and assets once belonging to Great Britain. In the meantime, the local government would take the place of the former French firm, Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez. In return, the Egyptian government promised to compensate for the stock price, taking the current market situation in Paris the day before into account. Lastly, since France even established a special council to directly guide the operation in the Suez Canal in Europe, which was severely against the state sovereign of Egypt since the canal was geographically located there, Egypt also urged to dissolve that council.

The stakeholders, especially Britain and France, were highly dissatisfied with the outbreak of tension. They brought the case to the United Nations Security Council, only to find a frustrating result that six principles standing on the Egyptian side were passed. On sparing efforts to make mediations and diplomatic pressure on Egypt, the Anglo-French side was surprised to discover that Nasser's diplomatic talent and Egyptian power had been underestimated before.

Eventually, the Anglo-French side agreed to utilise military moves without hesitation.

## **c. Great Impact (in the coming soon period)**

### **(i) Arab world**

For a time, the Arab nation was looked down upon and mocked for its softness, compromise and consistent failure. Now, Nasser's solid defence and authoritarian resilience were a counterattack and a symbol of national dignity, which won Egypt thousands of loyal supporters and united cooperation. Undoubtedly the leader of the nationalisation of the Suez Canal, Nasser, scratched the high crown among all the Arab countries.

### **(ii) Others**

The decisive action shocked the whole world with the miraculous progress. From one perspective, the British and French officially started to scheme for the military invasion to grasp the profit they used to have; from another dimension, it made the Soviet Union and the United States rethink their fixed point and competitive tension in the Middle East when it came to the attitude towards Egypt; apart from those, Egypt earned itself initiative according to negotiation, nearly across from the whole world.

#### d. Bone of Contention

The courage to nationalise the canal always won Egypt a good reputation. At the same time, the Nationalisation Decree of transferring all the assets and capital that belonged to Britain and France was faced with a controversial dilemma. Anglo-French forces argued that the specific measure was against international law, namely because they claimed that the nationalisation would potentially be a threat to free navigation, which was against the 1888 Convention and Agreement between the government of the republic of Egypt and the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, where stated that the freedom of navigation should be safeguarded at any time. Additionally, Britain showed dissatisfaction for it was listed in the latter treaty that all the assets including the intangible ones belonged to the United Kingdom. Nonetheless, although compensating for those shareholders, Nasser confiscated the solid pieces of stuff, which became one excuse for the Anglo-French side. Apart from this, the constraint in the pact that the United Kingdom must withdraw in 20 months deeply infected British interest in profitable the Suez Canal.

Admittedly, the regional sovereignty of Egypt should be highly respected. Nevertheless, so many regulations and international treaties were adopted by substantial foreign officials and journalists, which might lead to more inclinations to the have-done convention rather than state sovereignty theoretically. This decisively complicated the tension.

## II. The Conspiracy of Three Countries

Since 1875, the Suez Canal has been controlled by France and the United Kingdom. The nationalisation of the Suez Canal was the catalyst for the triple Israeli-British-French invasion of Egypt. They have different positions and appeals on this issue.

For the British, the announcement about the nationalisation of the Suez Canal surprised Britain and its Commonwealth because this Canal was a pivotal maritime transportation route to countries in Southern Africa and the South Pacific. Thus, the Suez Canal was termed "the jugular vein of the British Empire".<sup>36</sup> Besides, Britain wanted to maintain its presence in the Middle East, and Nasser's action was a significant threat. Prime Minister Anthony Eden thought the current crisis was the worst since 1940 and had an even stronger determination to subdue Nasser rather than appease him.<sup>37</sup>

For France, over the same period, France was facing an increasingly severe rebellion in Algeria. French leaders were convinced that Nasser supported National Liberation Front (Algeria), including training military personnel and providing military equipment. Nasser's nationalisation gave France a pretext to overthrow the Nasser regime and get an edge in the war with Algeria. Compared with this, controlling the canal was in second place.

36 Mahmood, Khalid. "BRITAIN AND THE SUEZ CRISIS." *Pakistan Horizon* 15, no. 2 (1962): 111–28. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41392707>.

37 Kelly, Andrew. "Suez." In *ANZUS and the Early Cold War: Strategy and Diplomacy between Australia, New Zealand and the United States, 1945-1956*, 1st ed., 157–78. Open Book Publishers, 2018. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv5zfv3m.13>.

For Israel, there were mainly four reasons for Israel to invade Egypt. First, in 1955, Ariel Sharon raided the Egyptian Army headquarters in Gaza, aiming to retaliate against the Palestinian fedayeen attack that killed an Israeli civilian.<sup>38</sup> Nasser started to allow Palestinian militants to raid Israel, which was a significant factor contributing to the Crisis in 1956. Second, The Egyptian government closed the Straits of Tīrān (at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba) and prevented Israeli ships from using the Suez Canal. Third, after the Palestine war, Israel's position in the Middle East remained precarious. Defeating Egypt would be a great chance to occupy the Sinai Peninsula and thus gain an edge in the long-term Arab-Israeli Conflict. Finally, the Egypt-Israel border war also contributed to the escalation of the Suez Canal Crisis.

Since July, the British and France had been planning to intervene militarily in Egypt. Initially, they intended to intervene directly, capturing Port Said or Alexandria, then occupying Cairo and banishing Nasser. This special operation would be under the command of the British due to its familiarity with the Egyptian terrain and its ownership over Cyprus, which would be the military base for this operation.<sup>39</sup> However, the Chief of the General Staff, Moses Dayan, visited Paris on 13 September. After negotiation, the three countries reach a consensus and set the war date for 20 October. Soon this plan was revised.

According to the new one, Israel would attack Egypt on 29 October, followed by the joint invasion of Britain and France two days later, on 31 October. Besides, they reached an agreement to land in Egypt on 1 November.<sup>40</sup> On 1 October, Dayan arrived in Paris for secret talks about the invading plan. France sent a general to Israel for inspection, who was satisfied with the operational readiness. On 17 October, Guy Mollet met Anthony Eden in Paris, and they reached an agreement that sent troops in the name of pacifying the Egyptian-Israeli conflict.<sup>41</sup>

On 22 October, Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion and Chief of the General Staff Moses Dayan went to Paris for an advanced tripartite meeting. During the meeting, Dayan made some suggestions about the operational details. Firstly, Israel sent a paratrooper battalion to Mitra Pass in retaliation for the Egyptian raid. Secondly, if British-French troops started the battle as scheduled, the Israeli troop would follow and fight in Sini Peninsula; if Britain and France were engaged, Israel would withdraw the paratroopers in Mitra Pass and declare this operation was a raid. Three countries confirmed this joint invading plan.<sup>42</sup>

### III. Israeli Invasion of Egypt and Intervention of Britain and France

Israel started mobilisation on 24 October. Dayan authorised a partial mobilisation at first, aiming to confuse other countries. Soon the partial mobilisation became all-out mobilisation. The conflict began on 29 October 1956. At about 3:00 p.m., Israeli Air Force

38 B, Nasr Kameel. Arab and Israeli Terrorism: The Causes and Effects of Political Violence 1936-1993. ISBN 978-0-7864-3105-2. McFarland, 2007.

39 张锡昌, 周剑卿: 《战后法国外交史 (1944-1992) 》, 世界知识出版社, 1993 年, 第 89 页。

40 田上四郎: 《中东战争全史》, 军事科学院外国军事研究部译, 解放军出版社, 1985 年, 第 70 页。

41 张锡昌, 周剑卿: 《战后法国外交史 (1944-1992) 》, 世界知识出版社, 1993 年, 第 89 页。

42 田上四郎: 《中东战争全史》, 军事科学院外国军事研究部译, 解放军出版社, 1985 年, 第 70 页。

launched a series of attacks on Egyptian positions all over the Sinai. Because Israeli intelligence expected Jordan to enter the war on Egypt's side, so Israeli soldiers were stationed along the Israeli-Jordanian frontier. Israeli 202<sup>nd</sup> Paratrooper Brigade was split, one was commanded by Colonel Sharon and the other by Rafael Eitan. At 4 p.m., the main force of 202<sup>nd</sup> Paratrooper Brigade, about 3,000 people under the command of Colonel Sharon, assembled at the border of Egypt-Israel to coordinate with airborne troops. Sharon learned that his brigade had but a fraction of the vehicle. Fearing that the airborne troops were isolated, he immediately crossed the border. At 5 p.m., the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Israeli 202<sup>nd</sup> Paratrooper Brigade, commanded by Rafael Eitan, went airborne at the Mitra Pass in the central part of the Sinai Peninsula with the support of the French Air Force. 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion planned to drop at Parker's Memorial and march to Heitan Defile to avoid direct contact with Egyptians. Due to a navigation error, they dropped at a position 5 miles away from their destination. Confused by the poor visibility, Rafael Eitan ordered his troops to entrench and avoid engagement with the enemy. At 9 p.m., the Israeli army dropped a large number of supplies, including eight jeeps, six 106 mm recoilless guns, medicine, water, and ammunition. Sharon's troops kept advancing, and he took Al-Kuntillah and attacked Themed. The Egyptian garrison at Themed faced Barrage and mortar fire from Israeli. After nearly 2 hours, the Egyptian fell back with heavy casualties. At 10:30 p.m., October 30, Sharon's troops arrived at Mitra Pass. The battle at Mitra Pass was very fierce. Due to the lack of reconnaissance, Sharon's troops took suffered significant losses, with 38 dead and 120 injured.<sup>43</sup> Soon the eastern part of the valley was occupied by Israel forces. At the same time, the Israeli 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade captured Ras al-Naqb, and al-Qusaymah was under the control of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade.

Besides the battle at Mitra Pass, Israel also attacked the Abu Uwayulah, which served as the road hub for the entire Sinai. East of Abu Uwayulah, several ridges formed a natural defence called Hedgehog. It was defended by the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, commanded by Colonel Sami Yassa. There was also an artillery regiment and two anti-tank batteries nearby. Simhoni assigned Major Izhak Ben-Ari's troops to carry out a reconnaissance operation on 30 October, and this operation soon became an all-out attack against Umm Qataf, but it failed due to the tough resistance of Egyptian forces. The 7<sup>th</sup> Armored Brigade of Israel captured al-Dayyiq, allowing Israeli to attack the western front and weaken the defence of Hedgehog. After the fall of al-Dayyiq, the 7<sup>th</sup> Armored Brigade of Israel was split into three forces. One went west, screening the operation of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Paratroop Brigade, and one followed Lieutenant Colonel Avraham Adan's forces, aiming to storm Ruafa. On 31 October, Adan's troop attacked Abu Uwayulah and took it on the same day. Then they assailed the Ruafa, and after paying heavy casualties and their tank, Ruafa finally fell to Israel. By contrast, the operation of the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade was less successful, and commander Colonel Shmuel Golinda was fired. However, Hedgehog was still captured by the Israeli on the evening of 1 November.<sup>44</sup>

According to the previous agreement, British and French forces would launch military operation against Egypt on 31 October, two days after the Israeli invasion. At 4:30 p.m.

43 田上四郎：《中东战争全史》，军事科学院外国军事研究部译，解放军出版社，1985年，第72-76页。

44 Varble, Derek. The Suez Crisis 1956. London: Osprey. P33-39.2003.

GMT, or 6:30 p.m., Cairo time, on 30 October, the government of the United Kingdom delivered an ultimatum to Egypt and Israel, requiring both parties to agree to the following terms within 12 hours, otherwise the UK and France “will intervene in whatever strength they may deem necessary to secure compliance”:

- (a) Stop all warlike actions by land, sea and air;
- (b) Withdraw all Egyptian military forces ten miles from the Suez Canal;
- (c) Accept occupation of Egyptian territory by United Kingdom and French forces of key positions at Port Said, Ismailia and Suez.<sup>45</sup>

The Israeli government replied with its acceptance of the ultimatum, while the Egyptian government rejected the request late at night on 30 October. At 6:00 p.m., Cairo time (similarly hereinafter unless otherwise specified), on 31 October, Nasser ordered the air defence forces deployed in the Nile River Basin and the Suez Canal area to be on alert to defend against possible air attacks, and forces deployed in the Sinai Peninsula to withdraw to protect the Suez Canal.<sup>46</sup>

In the first phase of the intervention, the joint forces launched air raids on Egypt. At 7:00 p.m. on 31 October, about 25 hours after the ultimatum, Anglo-French air forces bombed Egyptian airfields, railways, anti-aircraft arsenals, and military barracks.<sup>47</sup> From 1 to 3 November, airports were attacked on a large scale, and all around 260 Egyptian military aircraft in Egypt were completely destroyed.<sup>48</sup> This greatly relieved the pressure from the air for the Israeli army in the Sinai Peninsula. In addition to attack on military targets including Almaza Air Base and Cairo International Airport, the joint air forces also planned attacks on civilian infrastructures. According to a cablegram to the UN Secretary-General from UN staff stationed in Egypt, including Colonel Ely, the representative of the UN Truce Supervision Organisation in Cairo and John King Gordon, the Director of the Cairo Information Centre subsidiary to the Department of Public Information of the UN Secretariat, the “British radio has announced an imminent switch to include communication centres, railway stations and telephone exchanges, many of which are located in densely populated areas.”<sup>49</sup>

On the night of 3 November, the British government approved the plan for the second phase, airborne operations. On 5 November, British carrier-based planes bombed Port Said and Port Fuad, and then British and French paratroopers landed at Gami Airfield and Port Fuad respectively. At the request of the municipality of Port Said, the warring parties

45 UN Security Council, Document 3712, Letter dated 30 October 1956 from the representative of Egypt, transmitting a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt addressed to the President of the Security Council, S/3712, ¶ 2 (Oct. 30, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/S/3712>.

46 田上四郎：《中东战争全史》，军事科学院外国军事研究部译，解放军出版社，1985年，第84页。

47 同上。

48 同上，第80页。

49 UN General Assembly, Document 3267, Report of the Secretary-General submitted in pursuance of resolution 997 (ES-1), para. 5, adopted by the General Assembly on 2 November 1956, A/3267, Annex (Nov. 3, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/A/3267>.

in the city held negotiations in the afternoon and reached an agreement to implement a temporary ceasefire before 10:30 pm that day. On the same night, the British government restricted artillery operations used in combat and prohibited any shelling and bombing before landing, but these orders were not fully implemented by the joint forces.<sup>50</sup>

In the early morning of 6 November, the Anglo-French forces began to implement the third phase, landing operations. Their marines landed in Port Said and Port Fouad after bombardment by their naval and air forces. Before noon, both cities had been captured. The joint command planned to continue advancing south the next day and occupy Ismailia with French airborne troops, until receiving a cablegram from the British government, at 7:30 p.m., on 6 November, ordering them to stop combat operations before midnight. The commander held that it referred to London time (GMT), therefore he ordered the troops to immediately go south along the Suez Canal until the occupation of Al Cap at 2:00 a.m. local time on 7 November.<sup>51</sup>

## IV. Response of the International Society

### a. United States of America

At first, the US got involved because it withdrew money from aiding in building Aswan High Dam due to the concern that Congress and the government worried about those given money and evaluated the in-return profit they would earn. Afterwards, Nasser propagated the decree. Britain was looking for allies, at least in the diplomatic dimension, to earn them initiative during the mediation. The Commonwealth turned to the United States. At that time, the intention of Dulles had been implemented so well that the Northern Tier, the core component of the Baghdad Pact later on, gained success. Therefore, on Washington's stand, it was wiser to expand its sphere in the Middle East, with the free-riding proposed by Great Britain. The more allies the US had, the more competitive the US would advantage in the containment of the Soviet Union.

From another perspective, the US seriously considered the Anglo-American relationship since they were allies in National Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) which required cooperation. Additionally, the US and Great Britain signed the Constantinople Convention, also known as the 1888 Convention, which indicated that both sides were the shareholders of the Suez Canal. Thanks to that convention, they were armed with a persuasive and solid excuse if faced with accusations.

The third dimension was that Great Britain promised not to take military action unless they had no choice. This eliminated the US worry so that the US indeed stood on the British side.<sup>52</sup>

Admittedly, Eisenhower and Dulles focused more on the interest in the Middle East to fight against the USSR. For instance, Washington always put what the Arab world would

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50 田上四郎：《中东战争全史》，第 86-87 页。

51 同上，第 87-89 页。

52 Kelly Andrew, "Suez," In *ANZUS and the Early Cold War: Strategy and Diplomacy between Australia, New Zealand and the United States, 1945-1956*, 1st ed., 157–78.



think of the US into consideration when weighing its decision-making during the Suez Crisis, which meant the compliance with the British side might change depending on the situation. In the meantime, Great Britain reacted far from what they had promised Washington since Eden plotted with Mollet that military action was the superior choice.<sup>53</sup> Based on a decisively different background of the so-called consensus, the future of this would be foreseen.

After the invasion, the US got so shocked that the Anglo-French side did not even consult Washington's suggestions and directly invaded Port Said. Ironically, the US once hoped the Menzies government of Australia could persuade Britain not to provoke a war, but Australia and New Zealand firmly followed the Commonwealth. This exasperated the relationship between the western allies.<sup>54</sup>

The US was faced with a dilemma, for it was wholly concerned about the assumption that if America joined the anti-side of Egypt using forces, it would lose the support from substantial Arab countries in the Middle East, which was negatively estimated that the Soviet Union were to take a wide range of places. Eisenhower's government preferred the alternative that Nasser compensated and kept free navigation peacefully.

Eventually, the US promptly switched its position after it proposed a draft resolution to a ceasefire but was vetoed by France as well as the UK, and some Arab countries had already severed diplomatic relations with America and Saudi Arabia even cut off the export of petroleum to the US, which was a fatal destruction.<sup>55</sup> Under the circumstances accompanied by the USSR's pressure to use nuclear weapons, Washington did not hesitate anymore, condemning Anglo-French forces and even threatening them with economic sanctions. The hook-up movements worked effectively, and on 6 November, it finally reached a temporary ceasefire between Britain and France.

## **b. Soviet Union**

At that time, an anti-government movement fiercely covered Budapest in Hungary, in which the communists and involvement of Russia were aggressively condemned. Having shown great concern about the impact that would lead to an inferior position when competing with the US, the Soviet Union looked for solutions to Suez Crisis, balancing the interest in the Middle East.

Therefore, after the grand declaration of the nationalisation of the Suez Canal, especially when Anglo-French power was tempted by Suez interest, the USSR feared its significant impact in the Middle East would be thwarted. Accounting for this, the USSR agreed on the 1955 Moscow-Cairo arms deal.<sup>56</sup>

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53 *Ibid.*

54 *Ibid.*

55 Martin Domke, "American Protection against Foreign Expropriation in the Light of the Suez Canal Crisis," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 105, no. 8 (1957): 1033–43.

56 O. M. Smolansky, "Moscow and the Suez Crisis, 1956: A Reappraisal," *Political Science Quarterly* 80, no. 4 (1965): 581–605, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2147000>.

Since Moscow knew that once the Anglo-French military intervention broke out, the Arab world must uproar. Based on the recognition, the USSR held the view that the Suez Canal was geographically located in the Egyptian land and argued firmly in the first London Conference that any international reaction should take the country's sovereign rights the first-rate importance, with the principle of non-interference in the country's internal affairs.<sup>57</sup>

Beyond western countries' illusion that the Soviet Union must have been infiltrated and overwhelmed by anti-government attacks, the USSR spent abundant capital, advanced weapons and solid diplomatic support. After the draft resolution advocated by the USSR failed again, Kremlin sent letters separately to the Anglo-French forces, the United States and Israel. For Anglo-French forces, Moscow threatened with nuclear attack; for the United States, the USSR urged to form a cooperated army against Anglo-French forces; for Israel, the Soviet Union even deliberately mentioned the existence of this new-born Jewish country, which implied the consistent Israeli military action would pay off in menace.

Having seen the solid attitude from the backup of Egypt and the Soviet Union, all players in the game had to rethink their standing position. For instance, the United States did not reach the consensus of rallying an army with the Soviet but was thirsty for a ceasefire and shared the same diplomatic interest to some degree with Khrushchev.

Interestingly, the Soviet Union reacted with hesitation because it questioned the sincerity of Egypt, the one used to stay neutral and only turned to the Socialism bloc when trapped in a dilemma. Also, looking at the poor performance of Egyptian soldiers, Kremlin wondered whether Egypt was the chosen one to enhance the interest of the USSR in the Middle East area. Take an example; the Soviet Union were not against the peaceful solution that Cairo compensated and constantly opened the canal to pay the price. Later when Egypt asked for extra weapon support, the Soviets did not send the Iliushin-28 jet as it wanted.

Nevertheless, to summarise, the reaction stage of the Soviet Union could be divided into two unmistakable stages: the first one was to prevent hostility, and the ensuing one was to object to a significant decision that excluded the USSR.<sup>58</sup> The effect was evident that the Soviet Union earned the fame in Middle East area, even a majority of developing countries across the world. Furthermore, it successfully intervened in Anglo-French and Israeli forces turning to the respectively peaceful mediation that Anglo-French forces immediately accepted the ceasefire, and Israel withdrew from the Sinai Peninsula.

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57 Alex J Bellamy, "The Responsibility to Protect and the Problem of Military Intervention," *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 84, no. 4 (2008): 618–22, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25144868>.

58 O. M. Smolansky, "Moscow and the Suez Crisis, 1956: A Reappraisal," *Political Science Quarterly* 80, no. 4 (1965): 587, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2147000.587>, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2147000>.

### c. United Nations Security Council

After the London Conference, Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies visited Cairo on 3 and 4 in September, presenting Nasser with the protocol reached during the London Conference. Nasser then rejected it furiously.<sup>59</sup> Afterwards, the representative of Egypt drafted a letter to the Chair of the United Nations Security Council on 17 September 1956. The letter enunciated the justification of nationalising the Suez Canal based on the inherent sovereignty of Egypt and questioned whether the proposals excluding the sign of Egypt, one member of State Parties in the 1888 Convention, would work pretty.<sup>60</sup>

Later, on 5 October, the UK and France presented the President of the Security Council with the original text from the London Conference held on 21 August, initially aiming at exposing the situation in Suez Canal with the conspiracy that the Egyptian government would compromise under the public opinion and controversial atmosphere. Beyond their expectation, the British draft resolution [S/3666] failed on 5 October, while the one proposed by Yugoslavia passed [S/3675] with all permission on 13 in the same month, where six principles listed performed as mighty support for Egypt stipulated in the international framework like the UN, including but not limited to safeguard to ensure the freedom of navigation solely and admission to Egyptian utilisation and supervision.<sup>61 62</sup>

In order to reach a suitable mediation, the Secretary-General once wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt and provided another access, providing an exploratory conversation between Egypt, the UK and France directly but with no reply.<sup>63</sup>

The situation tensioned on 31 October when Israeli and Anglo-French military forces assaulted Egyptian territory. The representative of Egypt sent an urgent letter condemning the military actions adopted by the UK, France and Israel. During the Security Council 751st Meeting later that day, all delegates had a heated discussion.<sup>64</sup> According to the meeting records, some, like the USSR, seriously claimed the harsh and unfair measures launched by the Anglo-French side, some advocated to find a peaceful and just solution

59 Andrew Kelly, "Suez," In ANZUS and the Early Cold War: Strategy and Diplomacy between Australia, New Zealand and the United States, 1945-1956, 1st ed., 166.

60 UN Security Council, Document 3650, Letter Dated 17 September 1956 from the Representative of Egypt Addressed to the President of the Security Council, S/3650, (Sept. 17, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/S/3650>.

61 UN Security Council, Document 3666, France and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: draft resolution, S/3666, (Oct. 5, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/S/3666>.

62 UN Security Council, Resolution 118 (1956), Situation Created by the Unilateral Action of the Egyptian Government in Bringing to an end the System of International Operation of the Suez Canal, Which Was Confirmed and Completed by the Suez Canal Convention of 1888 (S/3675), S/RES/118(1956), 7 (Oct. 13, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/118\(1956\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/118(1956)).

63 UN Security Council, Document 3728, Exchange of Correspondence between the Secretary-General and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, S/3728, 2 (Nov. 3, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/S/3712>.

64 UN Security Council, Document 3712, Letter Dated 30 October 1956 from the Representative of Egypt Addressed to the President of the Security Council, S/3712, 6 (Oct. 20, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/S/3712>.

as the USA. In contrast, others merely reaffirmed the unilateral justification of their behaviours, consisting of the UK, France and Australia.<sup>65</sup> Owing to the unanimity, Resolution 118 passed by seven votes to 2 (France and the UK) with two abstentions which called for an Emergency Special Session right away.

#### d. Emergency Special Session

In response to the urgency of the Security Council, the first Emergency Special Session was held on 31 October.

The priority was to cease fire because the damage to the passage in the Suez Canal not only hurt the freedom of navigation, which would bring irredeemable costs for shareholders but also impaired the influence in the Middle East of some ambitious countries like the US and the USSR. During the session, most representatives reached a consensus on the current crux, which was the freedom of navigation and the compensation Egypt was obliged to make, implying that it was unnecessary to be trapped in belligerence. This was enunciated in Resolutions 997 and 998, urging that all parties involved in hostilities should reach a ceasefire immediately and refrain from intruding on military goods. The immediate ceasefire was raised by the US and agreed upon by all members except the UK, France, Israel, Australia and New Zealand.<sup>66 67</sup>

After hours of fierce fighting, the Commonwealth countries still expressed their solid support for the UK. In Canberra, Menzies even reaffirmed the belief to the Parliament on 3 November.<sup>68</sup> The rally of more military actions engaged sharpened the rift. Therefore, during the ensuing sessions, Resolution 999 passed the urge that all sides should withdraw behind the armistice line under the supervision of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation.<sup>69</sup>

Apart from this, members of the UN preferred to perform under the UN framework. Thus, several departments of the UN were also actively involved. According to Resolutions 998, 999 and 1000, an emergency international United Nations Forces were severely needed to compulsorily interrupt aggressive engagement in battle if necessary.<sup>70</sup> Soon, the United Nations Command was set up to provide convinced back up to the required

65 UN Security Council, Official Record 751, Seven Hundred and Fifty-first Meeting, S/PV.751, 2 (Oct. 31, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/S/PV.564>.

66 UN General Assembly, Resolution 997, Question Considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th Meetings, Held on 30 October 1956, A/RES/997(ES-I), ¶ 2 (Nov. 2, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/997\(ES-I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/997(ES-I)).

67 UN General Assembly, Resolution 998, Question Considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th Meetings, Held on 30 October 1956, A/RES/998(ES-I), ¶ 1 (Nov. 4, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/998\(ES-I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/998(ES-I)).

68 Andrew Kelly, "Suez," In *ANZUS and the Early Cold War: Strategy and Diplomacy between Australia, New Zealand and the United States, 1945-1956*, 1st ed., 174.

69 UN General Assembly, Resolution 999, Question Considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th Meetings, Held on 30 October 1956, A/RES/999(ES-I), 1 (Nov. 4, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/999\(ES-I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/999(ES-I)).

70 UN General Assembly, Resolution 998, Question Considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th Meetings, Held on 30 October 1956, A/RES/998(ES-I), ¶ 2 (Nov. 4, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/998\(ES-I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/998(ES-I)).

emergency international United Nations Forces.<sup>71</sup> The United Nations Command served as a supervisor to watch on the implementation of the passed items in the session and a barrier that alleviate the tension.<sup>72</sup>

Meanwhile, under the UN framework, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) played a decisive role. Of first-rate importance, the UNTSO would ensure all sides withdraw behind the armistice line, repeatedly calling upon Israeli and Franco-British forces to withdraw to required areas.<sup>73</sup> Besides, the UNTSO was the recruiting source of the United Nations Command (UNC), and Major-General E.L.M Burns was supposed to undertake the Chief position in UNC.<sup>74</sup>

Another authority put into practice was Advisory Committee. This organisation was founded with personnel from Brazil, Canada, Ceylon, Colombia, India, Norway and Pakistan. Its main goal was to do supplementary works of the UNC and ensure all perspectives were taken into consideration.<sup>75</sup>

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71 UN General Assembly, Resolution 1000, Question Considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th Meetings, Held on 30 October 1956, A/RES/1000(ES-I), ¶ 3 (Nov. 5, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1000\(ES-I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1000(ES-I)).

72 UN General Assembly, Resolution 1000, Question Considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th Meetings, Held on 30 October 1956, A/RES/1000(ES-I), ¶ 5 (Nov. 5, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1000\(ES-I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1000(ES-I)).

73 UN General Assembly, Resolution 999, Question Considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th Meetings, Held on 30 October 1956, A/RES/999(ES-I), ¶ 4(Nov. 4, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/998\(ES-I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/998(ES-I)).

74 UN General Assembly, Resolution 1000, Question Considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th Meetings, Held on 30 October 1956, A/RES/1000(ES-I), ¶ 5 (Nov. 5, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1000\(ES-I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1000(ES-I)).

75 UN General Assembly, Resolution 1001, Question Considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th Meetings, Held on 30 October 1956, A/RES/1000(ES-I), ¶ 10 (Nov.7, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1001\(ES-I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1001(ES-I)).

# Related International Law and Institutions

## I. The Suez Canal Convention of 1888

The Suez Canal Convention of 1888, also known as the Constantinople Convention, was the first international convention to define the international status of the Suez Canal ever since its completion in 1869, with the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, and Turkey as the high contracting parties<sup>76</sup>. However, the UK intended to utilise the Canal to preserve its dominant position in Egypt, so it did not formally adhere to the Convention until 1904 when France eventually recognised its sphere of influence in Egypt and Morocco.<sup>77</sup> After World War I, the Austria-Hungary Empire was divided into Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. The Convention was automatically succeeded by the three legal successor states, leaving the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czech, Slovakia, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, and Turkey as the signatory countries of the Convention today.

Concerning the content, the Convention first explicitly stipulated that the Suez Canal "shall always be free and of commerce or of war, without distinction of flag", indicating that all ships enjoy the freedom of passage regarding the Canal no matter in times of peace or war. Moreover, it forbade hostilities in the canal waters or the erection of fortifications along its banks and defined specific provisions for the use of the Canal in times of war. On top of that, it specified the duty of agents of the signatory powers in Egypt to watch over its execution and authorised the Egyptian government to take necessary measures in case of danger.<sup>78</sup>

As the fruit of the diplomatic efforts among the great powers since the early 1880s, the Convention was signed primarily to bring about a proper settlement of the status and use of the Suez Canal. The Convention not only defined the juridical status of the Canal but also established a system under which the Canal's regular and peaceful international operation could be carried out.

Nevertheless, the complexity of the political and military realities of the Canal Zone brought uncertainty to the practical implementation of the Convention. To have a voice in the administration of the Suez Canal Company, the UK purchased 44% of the share in the Suez Canal Company in 1875. In 1882, it further assumed military control of Egypt and Sudan, and in 1914 when war broke out between Turkey and Great Britain, the British occupation of Egypt was further transformed into a protectorate. In general, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the United Kingdom's influence over the affairs relating to the Canal significantly deepened, which brought about controversies regarding the observance of the Convention and thus foreshadowed the outburst of the conflict of interests between the United Kingdom, France and Egypt in this area.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> The initial signatory parties.

<sup>77</sup> Selak, Charles B, "The Suez Canal Base Agreement of 1954," *The American Journal of International Law*, 49, no. 4 (1955): 487–505, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2194417>.

<sup>78</sup> "Constantinople Convention," Suez Canal Authority, accessed January 13, 2023, <https://www.suezcanal.gov.eg/English/About/CanalTreatiesAndDecreases/Pages/ConstantinopleConvention.aspx>.

<sup>79</sup> Halford L. Hoskins, "The Suez Canal as an international waterway," *The American Journal of International Law* 37, No.3 (1943): 374-375. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2192719>

Regarding the Suez Crisis, the Convention was a crucial juridical reference for the Egyptian government and stakeholders who opposed Egypt's nationalising the Suez Canal Company. Following Egypt's refusal to negotiate, a Suez Canal Users Association was inaugurated in London on 1 October to resolve Suez Canal problems in consonance with the Convention and to assist its Member States in exercising their rights as users of the Canal.<sup>80</sup> On October 5, the Convention was directly referred to in the United Nations Security Council Draft Resolution S/3666, sponsored by the United Kingdom and France. In the Draft Resolution, UK and France denounced that the unilateral action of the Egyptian government constitutes serious harm to the system of international operation of the Canal, which has been confirmed and completed by the Convention, thus posing a threat to the freedom of navigation of the Canal for all its users as well as to the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>81</sup>

For the Egyptian government, the establishment of the User Association was a "flagrant violation" of the United Nations Charter and the Convention, for the Association was by its nature an organisation "with self-granted jurisdiction within the territory of a sovereign state member of the United Nations without the consent of that State".<sup>82</sup> It further asserted that the affairs of navigation since the nationalisation of the Canal had been a success due to its active devotion and that it was France, the United Kingdom and the former Suez Canal Company who had previously created difficulties in the maintenance of the freedom of passage of the Canal.<sup>83</sup>

As a result, in Resolution 118 of the Security Council, the free and open transit through the Canal without discrimination stipulated in the Convention was explicitly listed as one of the essential requirements for the settlement of the Suez question. In the meantime, the Resolution emphasised that the sovereignty of Egypt should be respected, and the operation of the Canal shall be insulated from the politics of any country.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, the freedom of navigation also received serious attention during the Suez Crisis. In the General Assembly Emergency Special Session, the General Assembly urged in its Resolution 997 (ES-I) that steps should be taken to "reopen the Suez Canal and restore secure freedom of navigation" as soon as the cease-fire was rendered effective.<sup>85</sup>

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80 "Declaration Issued by the Second Suez Canal Conference at London, September 21, 1956," Office of the Historian, accessed January 13, 2023, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v16/d252>

81 UN Security Council, Draft Resolution (S/3666), 5 (Oct. 5, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/S/3666>.

82 UN Security Council, Letter Dated 17 September 1956 from the Representative of Egypt Addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/3650), 3(Sep. 17, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/S/3650>.

83 Ibid, 3.

84 UN Security Council, Resolution 118 (1956), Situation created by the unilateral action of the Egyptian Government in bringing to an end the system of international operation of the Suez Canal, which was confirmed and completed by the Suez Canal Convention of 1888: resolution / adopted by the Security Council at its 743rd meeting on 13 October 1956(S/3675), S/RES/118(1956), ¶ 4-6 (Oct. 13, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/118>.

85 UN General Assembly, Resolution 997(ES-I), Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during its 1st emergency special session from 1 to 10 November 1956 (A/3354), A/RES/997(ES-I) (1956), 2(Nov. 2, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/997\(ES-I\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/997(ES-I))

## II. The Suez Canal Base Agreement of 1954

The Suez Canal Base Agreement, also known as the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1954, was signed at Cairo between the UK and Egypt on 19 October 1954. It replaced the Treaty of Alliance concluded in 1936 between the two countries, which terminated British occupation of Egypt since 1882 while preserving British presence in the Canal zone by establishing a series of British military installations in the Canal area.

In the Agreement of 1954, the UK declared that it would gradually withdraw its forces within 20 months from the date of signature, and the transfer of responsibility for the maintenance of the existing installations should proceed by the specific provisions in its Annex. For the duration of the Agreement, UK and Egypt shall respectively maintain parts of the facilities in good order.<sup>86</sup>

On top of that, the Agreement of 1954 provides that several parts of the Canal base shall be "kept in efficient working order and capable of immediate use" in case the urgency for reactivating the base should occur. The urgency was clearly defined as an "armed attack" launched by outside Power on any country which, at the date of signature of the present Agreement, "is a party to the Treaty of Joint defence between the Arab League States, signed in Cairo on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April 1950, or on Turkey."<sup>87</sup>

As a result of long-drawn negotiations, the Agreement of 1954 was a satisfactory compromise for the British and Egyptian governments. It released Egypt greatly from the Treaty of 1936, acknowledging Egypt's territorial sovereignty over the Canal zone while also ensuring that the UK could still utilise the Canal area to maintain its military influence in the Middle East and react effectively to the emergency if needed.<sup>88</sup> As decreed, the last British forces were withdrawn from Egypt in June 1956.

Regarding the Suez crisis, one idea is that British intervention in the Canal area after Egypt's nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company could have had its legal basis by invoking the Agreement of 1954. First, the Israeli invasion in the Canal zone on 29 October 1956 constituted an "armed attack" stipulated in the Agreement's provision, thus rendering the relevant articles of reactivating the base effective. Second, if the UK had reported to the Egyptian government about its dispatch of forces while sending troops in those parts of the Canal base defined as the parts that "shall be kept in efficient working order and capable of immediate use" in the Agreement of 1954.

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86 UN, No. 2833. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Egypt and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Signed at Cairo, on 19 October 1954, United Nations Treaty Series, Vol.210 (1955): 24, 26.

87 Ibid, 26.

88 Charles B. Selak, Jr, "The Suez Canal Base Agreement of 1954," *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 49, no. 4 (Oct, 1955): 498, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2194417>.



### III. Collective Security Mechanism

From an academic perspective, the collective security mechanism is a security guarantee mechanism that calls upon the use of collective force to deter or restrain possible aggression primarily from within the international community to maintain the security of every country, with specific means ranging from diplomatic and economic sanction to the use of force.<sup>89</sup>

In retrospect, the collective security mechanism was originally a response to the security threats arising from the balance of power in the 19<sup>th</sup> century's international politics. Collective security can be traced back to the Fourteen Point Peace Principle put forward by President Woodrow Wilson, which reflected the wish to diminish the role of the military alliance in the maintenance of international security and to build up a universal mechanism where countries are in full charge of the peace and security of each other. This idea was subsequently incorporated into the practice of international organisations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

As Wilson had envisioned, the League of Nations became the first international organisation to adopt the idea of collective security. The Covenant of the League of Nations stipulated that any war or threat of war the member of the League may confront would be "a matter of concern to the whole League", and should any member of the League resort to war disregarding the Covenant, the war would be deemed as a war against all the members of the League.<sup>90</sup> Despite the definite stipulation of collective security, the security mechanism of the League of Nations could neither adjust its structure in light of the changes in international power dynamics after World War I, nor overcome the grave divergence of interests between the UK and France.<sup>91</sup> As a result, the mechanism was rendered useless.

Subsequently, the United Nations was established on the eve of the end of World War II as another universal international organisation that incorporates the principle of collective security into its Charter. As decreed prominently in Chapter I and Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, with an end to maintain international peace and security, the United Nations may "take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace", and the Security Council may take actions including "demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations" if the peaceful measures were inadequate to fulfil such end, where all members of the United Nations shall "join in affording mutual assistance in carrying out the measures decided upon by the Security Council."<sup>92 93</sup>

However, having been put into practice only twice in the history of the United Nations, the collective security mechanism has been facing severe operational hurdles. As outlined in the UN Charter, the ideal decision-making process for the collective security mechanism

89 夏路：《联合国维和：集体安全？》，《国际政治研究》，2006年第3期，第76页。

90 "The Covenant of League of Nations," United Nations, accessed January 13, 2023, <https://www.ungeneva.org/en/library-archives/league-of-nations/covenant>.

91 徐弃郁，唐永胜：《从国际联盟到联合国——全球性安全机制的演变及前景》，《欧洲研究》，2005年第3期，第4-5页。

92 "United Nations," United Nations, accessed January 13, 2023, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/preamble>.

93 "United Nations," United Nations, accessed January 13, 2023, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-7>.

emphasises coordination, in which the Security Council holds the power to make decisions while the General Assembly and the Secretary-General primarily perform the role of offering necessary suggestions in consonance with the situation.<sup>94</sup>

Nevertheless, the right to veto enjoyed by the permanent Member States in the Security Council often constitutes severe constraints to the decision made by the General Assembly or the action of the Secretary-General in the face of an international security emergency.<sup>95</sup> Although in the Resolution Uniting for Peace in 1950, the General Assembly resolved that it may make appropriate recommendations to Members for collective measures, including the use of force when the Security Council failed to exercise its responsibility of maintaining peace and security due to lack of unanimity of the permanent members, the following practice proved that ambiguity was brought about in the division of powers between the Security Council and the General Assembly, thus gradually rendered impotent the decision-making mechanism of UN collective security.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>97</sup> On top of that, the ESS may not be efficient and effective on implementing collective security measures due to the different opinions each Member Country held for its national interest.

Generally, the United Nations gradually shifted the emphasis away from the pursuit of collective security, which sought to punish and defeat the aggressors with collective efforts, to the promotion and consolidation of another mode for maintaining international peace and security, i.e., the peacekeeping operation in adaptation to the international situation during the Cold War.<sup>98</sup> Despite the peacekeeping operation gradually prevailing, it still plays a somewhat limited role due to its restricted functions. From this perspective, the collective security mechanism remains feasible and even necessary to restore international peace and security when the peacekeeping operation fails to promote cessation of hostilities between the conflicting parties effectively and when the conflict is likely to escalate.

#### IV. Peacekeeping operation

Initiated and developed by the United Nations, peacekeeping operations are conducted to maintain or restore peace and security in conflict zones with the full consent of the warring groups. As former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld pointed out, the peacekeeping operation falls between the pacific means of resolving disputes, including promoting reconciliation or mediation, and the coercive means, such as carrying out sanction or military intervention, as defined in the sixth and the seventh chapter of the UN charter, respectively.

While having similar goals of maintaining peace and security, the peacekeeping operation differs from the collective security mechanism in many ways. First and foremost, unlike

94 门洪华：《联合国集体安全机制的困境》，《国际观察》，2002年第3期，第4页。

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid.

97 UN General Assembly, United action for peace / report of the First Committee, A/1456, 14(Oct.25, 1950), <https://www.un.org/en/A/1456>.

98 夏路：《联合国维和：集体安全？》，第78页。

the logic of collective security, which distinguishes the “Aggressor” from the “Aggressed”, peacekeeping operations stress the neutrality of the peacekeeping personnel involved. Second, peacekeeping operations do not seek to change the balance of power between the warring groups, whereas the collective security mechanism aims at the total defeat of the aggressor. Third, no military means shall be resorted to in the conduct of peacekeeping operations, which otherwise constitutes a significant part of the collective security mechanism next to the severance of diplomatic ties and the economic sanction.<sup>99</sup> Last but not least, peacekeeping operations may be associated with multiple circumstances, ranging from conflicts concerning one country or multiple countries, civil conflicts or conflicts involving government army, and cover the fields of politics, military affairs, civil affairs, etc., yet collective security concerns solely with the security issues of UN Member States.<sup>100</sup>

Over a span of decades, peacekeeping operations of the United Nations have achieved many significant advances in their operational mode and played a unique part in safeguarding international peace and security. In 1948, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation, composed of unarmed military observers, was sent to Palestine to supervise the truce, marking the first implementation of peacekeeping operations.

During the Suez Crisis, an “emergency international United Nations Force”, historically referred to as the First United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF-I), was established by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1000 (ES-I) and dispatched to the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt in November 1956. The force strived not only to maintain peace during and after the withdrawal of British, French, and Israeli forces but also for other work in compliance with the UN General Assembly Resolution 997(ES-I). Adhering to the principles of “neutrality, consent of the parties, and non-use of force except for self-defence”, the deployment and operation of the force provided a workable approach to resolving conflicts between countries and set a good precedent for the future practice of United Nations peacekeeping operations. By June 1967, the first UN peacekeeping force successfully concluded its mission and withdrew all its soldiers from Egypt.<sup>101</sup>

The two decades followed saw a golden age of peacekeeping. Ten operations were conducted, and more comprehensive measures were adopted to restore peace, human rights, and social development in troubled countries. After that, in the later period of the Cold War, peacekeeping operations were also extended to the larger picture, where UN forces were further authorised to assist in peace-making efforts in countries or regions that could not resolve conflicts on their own.<sup>102</sup>

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99 Nie jun, “An analysis on UN Peacekeeping Operations and Collective Security,” Chinese Journal of European Studies, No.3, 2005: 36-38.

100 夏路：《联合国维和：集体安全？》，第 82 页。

101 王联：《联合国在中东实现和平的具体措施》，《国际资料信息》，2008 年第 3 期，第 5 页。

102 夏路：《联合国维和：集体安全？》，第 81 页。

## V. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

Established in the wake of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949, the UNRWA aimed to implement direct relief and works programmes for Palestine refugees impacted by the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, during which more than 750,000 Palestinians were uprooted from their home.<sup>103</sup> The registered Palestine refugees, the specific group of people that the Agency serves, are defined as “persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict”. The descendants of Palestine refugee males, including adopted children, also have registration eligibility.<sup>104</sup>

In the case of the displaced, clean accommodation and adequate provision of essential goods for refugees are always a priority. Until today, UNRWA has assisted in constructing and operating 58 recognised camps in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, housing more than 1.5 million Palestinian refugees.<sup>105</sup> Thinking and acting in the long term for human rights to survive and develop, UNRWA has committed to the welfare of four generations of Palestine refugees, with its services ranging from education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructures and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance, including in times of war, to this day.<sup>106</sup>

Nevertheless, among the myriad obstacles refugees face in rebuilding their lives, the recurrence of military conflict is arguably the most intractable one since restoring regional peace and security always requires time and effort involving all parties, which was a significant problem for UNRWA during the Suez Crisis. By June 1956, the total number of refugees registered with the Agency had increased to 922,279, and the percentage of refugees living in camps had risen to 38.9.<sup>107</sup> In Gaza, where more than 213,000 persons lived on the assistance and services provided by UNRWA at the time, the regional security was stable. Regular works, including camp construction, were still on the way, while in November 1956, precipitating nearly everything into chaos, the Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip evoked dire concern from UNRWA.<sup>108</sup>

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103 “The Question of Palestine and the United Nations – UN Department of Global Communications Brochure,” United Nations New York, 2008: 10, accessed February 1, 2023, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-207762/>.

104 “Who we are,” United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, accessed January 13, 2023, <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are>.

105 “Palestine Refugees,” United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, accessed January 13, 2023, <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees>.

106 “Who we are,” United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are>.

107 UN General Assembly, Annual Report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East Covering the period 1 July 1955 to 30 June 1956, A/3212(SUPP), 2-3(Nov. 14, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/3212\(SUPP\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/3212(SUPP)).

108 UN General Assembly, Annual Report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East Covering the period 1 July 1955 to 30 June 1956, 2-3(Nov. 14, 1956).

In the special report submitted to the General Assembly on December 5, 1956, Heney R. Labouisse, the Director of UNRWA who held nationality of the United States of America, listed many harsh obstacles confronted by the Agency's international staff in Gaza, including the supply problem, health services, rations, etc., stating that it was "in the best interest of the refugees" that the Agency should carry on. Many efforts were made by the Agency, including sending an emergency officer team to supplement the international personnel in Gaza, establishing new lines of supply and communication by sea, making emergency shipments of items by plane, etc.<sup>109</sup>

Regarding the Israeli military action, the Director stated that the Israeli military operations had caused many casualties in Khan Yunis and Rafah and rendered the Agency almost impotent in continuing their work among and for refugees. The agency also talked with the Israeli authorities to strive for the welfare of the refugees; an agreement between the Agency and the Israeli authorities had been reached in which the government would, to the best of its ability, protect the personnel, installations, and other properties of the Agency and permit the free movement of staff and vehicles of the Agency that subject to the local regulations.<sup>110</sup>

After the withdrawal of the Israeli force from the Gaza Strip, UNRWA undertook its responsibility to the best of its ability. The Agency not only resumed most of its work despite the extremely grave financial situation but also changed the situation for the better regarding the provision of rations, supplementary feedings, medical services, education, etc.<sup>111</sup> On top of that, the Agency also expanded its responsibilities to assist more people in the Gaza Strip in sustaining their basic needs for life by distributing rations to needy non-refugees.<sup>112</sup>

To sum up, UNRWA played a meaningful role in relieving the humanitarian crisis caused by the Israeli attack during and after the Suez crisis. It is also true, however, that the setbacks and difficulties the Agency had faced along the way, such as the lack of funds and personnel, the rigid regulations of local authorities, etc., were obstacles that prevented it from functioning more effectively.

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109 UN General Assembly, Special Report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East Covering the period 1 November 1956 to mid-December 1956, A/3212/ADD.1(SUPP), 1-3(1957), [https://undocs.org/en/A/3212/ADD.1\(SUPP\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/3212/ADD.1(SUPP)).

110 Ibid, 3.

111 UN General Assembly, Annual Report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East Covering the period 1 July 1956 to 30 June 1957, A/3686, 1-3(1957), <https://undocs.org/en/A/3686>.

112 Ibid, 8.

## VI. United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation in Palestine (UNTSO)

Set up in direct response to the emergency in Palestine, the UNTSO was the first peacekeeping operation implemented by the United Nations ever. In May 1948, with the outbreak of the first Arab-Israeli war, the Security Council decided in Resolution 50 (1948) that the truce between Israel, Palestine and other Arab countries embroiled should be supervised by the United Nations Mediator with the assistance of military observers.<sup>113</sup> The first group of officers, which became known as the UNTSO, was then sent to Egypt to supervise the observance of the terms of the armistice agreements.

Notwithstanding tremendous efforts, UNTSO faced numerous difficulties and suffered major setbacks in restoring peace there. Between late 1948 and early 1949, more fighting took place, creating a humanitarian crisis that displaced almost 750,000 Palestinians.<sup>114</sup> In September 1948, in the middle of negotiations between the parties, the United Nations Mediator, Count Bernadotte, was shot dead in the Israeli-held sector of Jerusalem. His deputy, Ralph Bunche, was appointed as the acting mediator. It was not until July 1949, under the auspices of the United Nations, that an armistice was eventually achieved by all parties.<sup>115</sup>

In August 1949, the UNTSO was tasked with supervising the carrying out of the armistice. After that, the military officers of UNTSO remained stationed in the Middle East, monitoring ceasefires, preventing isolated incidents from escalating, and assisting other peacekeeping operations.<sup>116</sup>

The cumulative peacekeeping experience of the UNTSO laid a good foundation for peacekeeping operations during the Suez Crisis. In 1956, confronted by the emergency of military conflict between parties, the General Assembly established, in compliance with its Resolution 1000 (ES-I), an emergency international armed force to secure and supervise the cessation of hostility, appointing the Chief of Staff of the UNTSO, Major-General E.L.M. Burns, as the Chief of Command of the force, who was further authorised to recruit officers from the military observers in the UNTSO.<sup>117</sup> On 15 November, the armed force consisting of military officers from 10 countries were gradually stationed in Egypt with the consent of the Egyptian government, aiming to "help maintain quiet during and after the withdrawal of non-Egyptian troops" and work in accordance with other terms defined in the Resolution 997 (ES-I).<sup>118</sup> As a result, the personnel from UNTSO functioned as the nucleus of the force, completed the mission of supervising the withdrawal of the British, French and Israeli forces behind the armistice lines, and managed to create a buffer for both sides along the armistice lines in the following ten years.<sup>119</sup>

113 UN Security Council, Resolution 50(1948), Adopted by the Security Council at its 310th meeting, S/RES/50(1948), ¶ 6 (May. 29, 1948), [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/50\(1948\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/50(1948)).

114 UN, The Question of Palestine and the United Nations – UN Department of Global Communications Brochure, United Nations New York, 2008: 10, accessed February 1, 2023, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-207762/>.

115 Ibid, 9-11.

116 王联：《联合国在中东实现和平的具体措施》，第4页。

117 UN General Assembly, Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during its 1st emergency special session from 1 to 10 November 1956, A/3354, 3(1956), <https://undocs.org/en/A/3354>.

118 UN Secretary General, Question considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th meetings held on 30 October 1956 : 2nd and final report of the Secretary-General on the plan for an emergency international United Nations force requested in the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 4 November 1956 (A/3276), 5(Nov.6, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/A/3276>.

119 孙洁琬，《皮尔逊与第一支联合国维和部队的创建》，《世界历史》，2003年，第5期，第33页。

With the core aim of preventing the escalation of conflicts, the military observers of UNTSO have become adaptive to the specific needs of different types of peacekeeping operations. UNTSO has also extended its influence to multiple countries in the Middle East than Palestine. The personnel of UNTSO have acted flexibly in the changing circumstances following the wars in 1967 and 1973 and played a fundamental role in maintaining peace and security in the Middle East to this day.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> "Background," United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation, accessed January 13, 2023, <https://untso.unmissions.org/background>.

# Bloc Positions

## I. USSR and Other Eastern European Countries

The 1950s were bound to be an extraordinary stretch of time. The competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, the withered British and French colonial hegemony, and the rise of new nation-states all constituted a unique panorama of time. It was a time when the USSR and its communist ideology took control of Eastern Europe, and it was also a time when the Soviet communist road got unbefitting for other Eastern European countries, leading to the revolution in Poland and Hungary. When other Soviet satellite states were striving to discover the right path, the USSR was anxious about maintaining its influence and was distracted in the Suez Crisis.

In contrast to Egypt which was directly attacked by the Britain-France invasion, the USSR was also an indirect victim. This Britain-France military action against the anti-colonial tide seriously challenged Russia's Egyptian interests, established as a result of the 1955 Moscow-Cairo arms deal.<sup>121</sup> The USSR deemed that what Britain and France had done in the Middle East was illegitimate out of fear of losing their influence in the Arab East. Simultaneously, the Hungary uprising against both domestic Communists and the Russian presence in Hungary, was regarded in Moscow as a direct threat to Soviet predominance in Eastern Europe and forced the USSR to reassert its control over the rebelling satellite.

In October, the USSR agreed to participate in the proposed meeting with other Western imperialist countries, in the name of protecting Cairo's sovereign rights and dignity.<sup>122</sup> Meanwhile, before and after the Egyptian nationalisation decree, the USSR extended to Egypt its moral and political backing. In August 1956, the USSR used the first London conference to blast the "atavistic colonial practices" of the Western powers and to pledge its full support to Nasser and Arab nationalism.<sup>123</sup> Shortly after, Soviet Prime Minister Menzies announced the statement of backing President Nasser in his rejection of the Dulles plan. Facing the great risk of losing its prestige in the Arab East and the underdeveloped world, and seeing Britain and France disobeying the Security Council's recommendations, the USSR sent threatening messages to the invaders of nuclear use and petroleum sanction, in the hope of intervening with the situation.

The two main purposes of Soviet diplomacy at that time were to exacerbate tension while attempting to avert the outbreak of open hostilities, and oppose any settlement from which Moscow might be excluded.<sup>124</sup> Some believed that it was the situation in Hungary

121 O. M. Smolansky, "Moscow and the Suez Crisis, 1956: A Reappraisal", *The Academy of Political Science*, 1965, 581.

122 *Ibid*, 583.

123 *Ibid*, 584.

124 *Ibid*, 587.



that prevented Soviet's further move, some held the opinion that whatever the USSR did was in its best interest. The Suez Crisis heavily impaired the old colonial empires, opening a refreshing bipolar world.

## II. Egypt and Other Arab Countries

With the awakening of nationalism and anti-colonialism in the Middle East, the Arab states began to revolt against the colonial rule of Britain and France. In 1951, Prime Minister Mossadeq of Iran nationalized Britain's oil interests, and Egypt harassed the Suez Canal base, while communism gained ground in Syria.<sup>125</sup> The promotion of the Baghdad Pact by Britain also provoked the anger of Arab countries and led to their resistance.

Egypt regarded itself as the victim of the combined premeditated aggression by Israel, the United Kingdom and France. And Egypt further claimed that the UK and France had no right to resort to force, with the alleged purpose of safeguarding the Canal and ensuring the free passage of vessels, which in fact put Egypt into bloody aggression. As the UK and France were taking advantage of their influence and disturbing the UN resolution implementation, Egypt would make efforts to defend itself and protect its rights against this armed and unprovoked attack. Egypt stood by the attitude that the invaders would have to bear the consequences of trampling Egyptian sovereignty and violating the UN Charter.<sup>126</sup>

From the 50s, Egypt gradually realized the crucial role of the Third World countries, and started participating in relevant events actively, including the Asia-African Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement. In the meanwhile, other Arab states also recognised the importance of national independence, and a new pole was emerging on the world stage, though under the shadow of the Soviet-US rivalry.

## III. Israel

After the first Palestine war, relations between Israel and Egypt have been deteriorating. Since 1955, Nasser supported numerous raids initiated by Palestinians, killing many Israeli civilians. Besides, Egypt also blocked the Gulf of Aqaba due to the deteriorating relationship between the two countries. These exacerbated Israel's hostility toward Egypt. From 1949 to 1953, Egypt allowed Israelis to use the Eilat port. Still, on 5 September 1955, Egypt closed the Gulf of Aqaba and its air space in response to Operation Black Arrow and Operation Elkayam, which killed hundreds of Egyptians. In addition, border conflicts also play a significant role. The Suez War was a natural outgrowth of the insecure border situation with Egypt, where repeated clashes eventually deteriorated into full-scale war. Before the Suez Canal Crisis broke out, the tension on the border between Egypt and Israel grew from 1949 to 1956 because both countries held conflicting interpretations of the Armistice Agreement. Besides, the Egypt-Israel Armistice Agreement was merely a truce without ending the conflict between the two countries<sup>127</sup>.

<sup>125</sup> Anthony Adamthwaite, "Suez Revisited", *International Affairs*, 1988, 450.

<sup>126</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Records of meetings 561, A/PV.561, 3(Nov. 1, 1956), <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/NL5/600/50/PDF/NL560050.pdf?OpenElement>.

<sup>127</sup> Oren, Michael B. "Escalation to Suez: The Egypt-Israel Border War, 1949-56." *Journal of*

However, it is worth noting that the Czech-Egyptian arms deal made public in September 1955 may also contribute to this crisis because it exacerbated Israel's insecurity. Since the U.S., British, and France refused to provide Egypt with the necessary fund to construct the Aswan High Dam, Egypt's ties with the Soviet Union kept growing. This arms deal gave the Soviet Union a chance to gain a strategic edge in the Middle East and, to drive a wedge between Egypt and the West, altering the military balance in the region in Egypt's favour. Thus, the status quo was changed dramatically. Israel feared that Nasser might take this advantage and attack Israel<sup>128</sup>. According to Israel's prime minister's diary, he was fretting that Soviet Bloc's military presence may threaten Israel's security.

## IV. Americas

### a. United States

The position of the United States during the Suez Crisis underwent significant changes, reflecting the shifting priorities of US foreign policy during the Cold War.

United States faced two major diplomacy dilemmas during the crisis. The first one occurred in the early stages, as the US government was cautious in its response, largely due to its focus on maintaining good relations with both Britain and Egypt. Britain has always been a close ally of the United States, while if America joined the anti-side of Egypt using forces, it would lose the support from substantial Arab countries in the Middle East, which was negatively estimated that the Soviet Union were to take a wide range of places. Despite Britain's push for military action, the United States, recognizing the importance of maintaining Western influence in the Middle East, carefully considered the potential benefits and drawbacks. As Hoover wrote to Eisenhower on July 28, the "confiscation of the Suez company was not sufficient reason for military intervention."<sup>129</sup>

Publicly, United States took the moral high ground. President Eisenhower criticized Britain and France for violating the United Nations Charter and instructed his ambassador to the United Nations, Henry Cabot Lodge, to call for an emergency meeting of the Security Council to propose a resolution condemning the invasion.<sup>130</sup> However, Britain and France, anticipating this move, used their veto power as Security Council members to block the resolution. Despite this setback, Eisenhower refused to let the matter rest and had other means at his disposal. The expectation that the veto would resolve the issue was thwarted by another mechanism provided for by the Charter. In 1950, during the Korean crisis, the United States led the United Nations General Assembly in adopting the Uniting for Peace resolution, allowing the General Assembly to address security matters vetoed by one of the five permanent members of the Security Council. Now it was being invoked against two senior members of NATO. In public, Eisenhower justified this move by citing the equal protection of the laws and the obligation of all United Nations members to abide by its charter. The Soviet Union joined the United States in condemning the aggressors and sanctions were considered at the General Assembly, which met immediately following

*Contemporary History* 24, no. 2 (1989): 347–73. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/260827>.

128 Susser, Asher. "Israel's Place in a Changing Regional Order (1948–2013)." *Israel Studies* 19, no. 2 (2014): 218–38. <https://doi.org/10.2979/israelstudies.19.2.218>.

129 Department of State to the Secretary of State, 28 July 1956, FRUS 1955–1957 Vol. XVI, 25.

130 Pnina Lahav, "The Suez Crisis of 1956 and Its Aftermath: A Comparative Study of Constitutions, Use of Force, Diplomacy and International Relations," *Boston University Law Review*, Vol. 95, No. 4, (2015):1297–135, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2693269>.

the veto. Under strong American leadership and Soviet support, the Assembly remained in session from November 1 to November 10, putting pressure on the two European powers until they accepted defeat and announced their withdrawal.<sup>131</sup>

Yet the other dilemma knocked in when the United States had to simultaneously manage the Suez Crisis and the Soviet invasion of Hungary at the same time on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1956. It was a difficult task to uphold international law by condemning the actions of its allies while turning a blind eye to the violation of the same principles by its arch-rival, the Soviet Union, regarding Hungary.<sup>132</sup>

## **b. Canada**

Prior to 1956, Canada's policy towards the Middle East was one of detachment and indifference. Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent and Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester B. Pearson, initially held the view that the region was as a far-off and unfamiliar region, separated both geographically and culturally from Western Europe and the North Atlantic, where Canada's traditional political, security, economic, and cultural interests were centred. It was best left to the major powers to handle.

However, the British 'invasion' of Egypt during the Suez Crisis had a profound impact on Canada and its core interests. Firstly, it defied the authority of the United Nations, a crucial forum for Canadian diplomacy, by disregarding the ongoing Security Council discussion on Egypt's complaint against Israel. Secondly, it posed a risk of alienating India and dividing the Commonwealth, which Canada relied on for navigating the post-colonial world. Lastly, it caused worries about the potential negative effect of the Anglo-French intervention on the relationship between the United States and Britain, Canada's closest allies, which could harm NATO and Canada's national security.<sup>133</sup>

Having such concerns in mind, Canada proposed the creation of a permanent United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF), marking a significant turning point in Canada's relationship with Britain. As Britain distanced itself from Canada and shifted its focus toward Europe, Canada found itself having to embrace its new status as a North American nation.<sup>134</sup> Additionally, Pearson's successful establishment of the UNEF had a lasting impact on Canadian foreign policy, transforming Canada from a passive bystander to a small but active and distinct player in regional affairs.

## **c. Central America, Latin America, and the Caribbean**

Most Latin American countries took a 'neutral' approach on the Suez crisis. These countries focused on maintaining their own independence and neutral stance in international affairs and may have felt that taking a strong position on the Suez Crisis would have drawn them into a larger conflict. An appropriate example would be Brazil. Brazil supported the Partition Plan in 1947 but did not officially recognize Israel until February 1949 and establish diplomatic relations until 1951 due to pressure from the Brazilian Arab diaspora and the Catholic world.<sup>135</sup> In addressing the Israeli-Palestinian

<sup>131</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>132</sup> Kelly Andrew, "Suez," In *ANZUS and the Early Cold War: Strategy and Diplomacy between Australia, New Zealand and the United States, 1945-1956*, 1st ed., 157–78.

<sup>133</sup> Greg Donaghy, "The Politics of Accommodation: Canada, the Middle East, and the Suez Crisis, 1950–1956," *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis* 71, no. 2 (2016): pp. 313-327, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702016643261>.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>135</sup> Ralph Benyamin Neuberger, *Israel's Relations with the Third World (1948-2008)* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, S. Daniel Abraham Centre for international and regional studies, 2009).

conflict, Brazil adopted a policy of equidistance, maintaining impartiality and equal distance from the demands of both parties.<sup>136</sup> Similar diplomatic actions were adopted by others, partly because of the strong presence of both Arab and Jewish diasporas in Latin America and a lack of trade interests in the region. In international forums, Brazil followed a consensual approach, either voting with the majority or abstaining.<sup>137</sup> It should be noted that Brazil's involvement in the first UN Emergency Force (UNEF) along the Israeli-Egyptian border during the Suez Crisis in 1956 was not a divergence from this equidistance, as Macedo Soares, Brazil's Minister of Foreign Relations, announced that the country believed "the Suez Canal belongs to Egypt, but its use constitutes an international service,"<sup>138</sup> and problems relating to it should be discussed and resolved within the United Nations.

## V. United Kingdom & France

In July 1956, Egypt's President, Gamal Abdel Nasser, initiated the nationalisation of the Suez Canal, which had long represented colonialism in the Middle East. This action sparked alarm among the UK, the dominant colonial power in the region during WWII, and France, who faced agitation for independence in Algeria, which was being supported by the Egyptian government. Nasser not only extended military training and other forms of support to the Algerian rebels, but also adopted the Algerian independence movement as a crucial component of his larger vision for pan-Arab liberation.<sup>139</sup>

The Cold War also added to the tensions, as Nasser had just completed a large arms deal with the Soviet Union, which heightened concerns about the ramifications of rising Arab nationalism under Nasser's leadership and the possibility of Soviet influence in the region.<sup>140</sup> To maintain their status as world powers, Britain and France combined forces to restore their colonial and European dominance in the Middle East.

Oil was another critical concern arising from the Suez crisis for both Britain and France. For Britain, if her plan worked out, she would restore her hegemony in Iraq and Jordan and secure her access to the oil of the Middle East. France would consolidate her influence in the Middle East through Lebanon and Israel while her problems in Algeria would come to an end with the fall of Nasser.<sup>141</sup> In the end, the Suez crisis disrupted two of the three main oil supply routes to Europe: The Canal, which was blocked by several ships sunk by Egypt, and the Iraq pipeline. This left Europe facing a severe oil shortage just as winter had arrived and a faltering economy. The United States eventually offered help, but at a high cost - it demanded unconditional British withdrawal, just as it did regarding the monetary crisis.

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136 Jonathan Grossman, "Impartiality as a Lack of Interest: Israel, Brazil, the Jewish Diaspora, and the Question of Jerusalem", *Israel Studies* 23, no. 1 (2018): 152-176. [muse.jhu.edu/article/686350](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/686350).

137 Véllez Federico, "Do Suez Ao Canal Do Panamá e Além: A Influência De Gamal Abdel Nasser Na América Latina," *Varia Historia* 31, no. 55 (2015): pp. 163-191, <https://doi.org/10.1590/0104-87752015000100007>.

138 Posición de la América Latina ante la Grave Crisis en el Cercano Oriente. *La Prensa* (Buenos Aires), p.3, 8 nov. 1956.

139 *Ibid*, 2.

140 *Ibid*, 2.

141 Avi Shlaim, "The Protocol of Sévres, 1956: Anatomy of a War Plot," *International Affairs* 73, no. 3 (1997): pp. 509-530, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2624270>.

## VI. Non-aligned Countries

The inception of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) can be traced back to the Bandung Conference of 1955 in Indonesia, which was influenced by three prominent figures in the global community: Nehru of India, Tito of Yugoslavia, and Nasser of Egypt. The conference brought forth the idea of non-alignment, aimed at avoiding the Third World's involvement in the Cold War's East-West ideological strife, and instead prioritizing national independence endeavors, alleviating poverty, and promoting economic development. The establishment of NAM was aimed at mitigating the Cold War confrontations and these ideals were officially ratified at the inaugural non-aligned summit held in Belgrade in 1961.

Arab non-aligned countries tend to directly link their positions to the Israeli conflict. They argue that resistance to Zionism is not only due to the Israeli occupation of Arab Palestine. Since Israel is supported by 'imperialist' forces, Arab nationalism must also fight Israel and world Zionism in this way, as a product of anti-imperialism, to find a middle way between 'imperialism' and the communist bloc.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Crabb, Cecil V., "India, Egypt, and New Patterns of Non-alignment," *World Affairs* 134, no. 4 (1972): 289–305, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20671333>.

## Background of the Hungarian Uprising

After World War II, for people to express their political views, a general election was held in Hungary by six political parties in 1945. Five parties won seats in the Parliament, and the Communist party ranked second with 70 seats.<sup>143</sup> Nevertheless, with the political infiltration of the Soviet Union, the influence of the Communist Party was steadily enhanced, and leaders of non-Communist Parties in Hungary were either silenced, arrested, or forced to flee abroad by 1948.<sup>144</sup> In the same year, Hungary's Communist Party merged with the left wing of the Social Democratic Party, giving rise to a single-party political system ruled by the Communists.

Since 1949, Hungary's economy and politics were strictly subordinated to the Soviet Union's instructions and rendered severely inconsistent with its domestic conditions. Under the rigid economic controls, Hungary's agriculture and industry sectors suffered greatly, and the living standards of the Hungarian people were difficult to sustain.<sup>145</sup> On top of that, the harsh communist rule by Hungary's Prime Minister Matyas Rákosi, which adopted ruthless means to root out dissenters and confine people's thoughts through peremptory ideological propaganda, added more tension to the social atmosphere.<sup>146</sup>

On February 25, 1956, the Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, made a secret speech during the 20th Party Congress themed on Stalin's one-man rule, attacking his "intolerance, brutality and abuse of power"<sup>147</sup>. The following political moves, including the release of millions of political prisoners and the rehabilitation of many who had perished, rapidly aroused the appeal of de-Stalinisation across eastern Europe countries. Among them, Poland and Hungary were the first countries where massive political movements occurred.

In Poland, the developments in realms of politics, economy, culture, and education were modelled closely on Soviet Union's pattern after World War II, similar to the conditions in Hungary, and the secret speech given by Khrushchev evoked great political unrest. In June 1956, industrial workers led a strike in Poznań, a city in the mid-west of Poland, which soon escalated into an uprising demanding political freedom and economic reforms. The Poland government crushed the uprising with harsh means, which was widely criticised by the West. In October 1956, the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party was reorganised. Gomulka, a controversial member of the Central Committee who had once spoken against the Soviet pattern, was elected as the First Secretary of the Central Committee.<sup>148</sup>

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143 UN General Assembly, Report of the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary, A/3592, 5(1957), <https://undocs.org/en/A/3592>.

144 Ibid, 4.

145 侯凤菁：《1956年匈牙利事件与东欧剧变》，《俄罗斯中亚东欧研究》，2006年第5期，第24页。

146 Ibid, 25.

147 Frank B. Gibney, "Nikita Khrushchev," Britannica, accessed 7 February, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Nikita-Sergeyevich-Khrushchev>.

148 卜丁：《波兹南事件前后的波兰》，《苏联东欧问题》，1981年第3期，第55页。

The Poznań uprising and Gomulka's taking office were considered significant by the Hungarian people as attempts to strive for independence from Soviet control. Meanwhile, voices speaking for freedom were also developing in Hungary. On 17 March 1956, the Petofi Club was established through the sanction of the Hungary authority. Affiliated with the Union of Working Youth, the Club aimed to provide a legal forum for discussions for intellectuals. Upon its establishment, the Club held a series of symposiums with topics ranging from student organisations, economy, history, philosophy, education, newspapers, etc., receiving many acknowledgements and support from relevant sectors of society and the Hungary authority.<sup>149</sup>

Following the Poznań uprising, fearing that the increasing political influence the Club had may pose a threat to the Communist rule in Hungary, the activities of the Club were criticised and halted by Rákosi. Having been discontented with Rákosi's faults, the Soviet Union was more convinced by this incident that Rákosi should be replaced. Before long, on 18 July, Rákosi resigned from the post of the First Secretary of the Central Committee at the intervention of Mikoyan, a member of the Central Committee of the Soviet Union Communist Party, and was succeeded by Ernő Gerő, who, however, did not bring pronounced changes to the domestic situations in the following months.<sup>150</sup>

In September 1956, the Club resumed its activities, working in joint efforts with other sectors of society to demand the rehabilitation of Rajk László, a former member of the Hungarian Communist Party who had been arrested and sentenced to death illegally for his disagreement with the Soviet pattern during Rákosi's rule. The Club's mobilisation struck a chord with the Hungarian people. On 6 October, a state funeral was held for Rajk and four former Hungarian leaders, and approximately 300,000 people gathered on the streets in Budapest to mourn for Rajk.<sup>151</sup> Imre Nagy, the former Prime Minister of Hungary who had been welcomed by people for his firm promotion of reforms in the realm of politics and economy yet removed from the post in 1955, was also at the front of the procession.<sup>152</sup>

The national sentiments continued to mount, and the leaders of the Party, including Gerő, did not, however, take an approach to alleviate the tension and paid a visit to Yugoslavia at the critical juncture.<sup>153</sup> On 20 October, news that Gomulka had been elected as the First Secretary caused a sensation in Hungary, changing the political situation in Budapest rapidly. On October 22, student representatives from colleges and universities held a joint conference. They decided that a demonstration should be staged to express support for the Polish people and to put forward political demands for the Hungarian government. The Petofi Club also joined the event and circulated through newspapers the 10 points it drafted regarding people's demands for the government.<sup>154</sup> The sentiments of the mass in Budapest surged higher, leading directly to the ensuing demonstration and uprising on 23 October.

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149 张文红：《裴多菲俱乐部的主要活动》，《当代世界与社会主义》，1996年第2期，第73-75页。

150 Ibid, 76.

151 冯绍雷：《匈牙利事件的悲剧》，《国际问题资料》，1985年第7期，第28页。

152 Ibid, 28.

153 Ibid, 28.

154 张文红：《裴多菲俱乐部的主要活动》，第77页。

## Hungarian uprising

The Hungary uprising took place against the backdrop of the Cold War, during which the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union became increasingly fierce, and the relations between the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in East Europe continued to worsen. Ended in merely twelve days, the uprising had undergone rapid eruption and complex evolution, leading to severe economic loss, humanitarian tragedies and multiple international repercussions.

On October 22, 1956, students and intellectuals marched on the streets, putting forward a list which encompassed 16 points for further political reforms including the withdrawal of Soviet Union troops, free elections, reorganisation of Hungary's economic life under the direction of specialists, and the return to power of Imre Nagy— the former Prime Minister of Hungary who had been once side-lined and forced out of office for his independent attitude, etc.<sup>155</sup>

The following day, more people in Budapest joined the procession to express national grievances. However, the broadcast speech by Ernő Gerő, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Hungary Communist Party, angered the mass and prompted them to surround the House of Parliament. With the police firing into the crowds, peaceful demonstrations escalated into an armed uprising on the same night. The Politburo of the Communist Party of Hungary soon decided to reappoint Imre Nagy as Hungary's Prime Minister to assuage the widespread anger, who officially took office on 25 October.

Meanwhile, as Nagy had not yet become the Prime Minister, Gerő dismissed Nagy's rejection, requesting the Soviet Union to send troops to take control of the situation. The Soviet Union approved of the idea of dispatching forces. On October 24, accompanied by the forces stationed beforehand along the borders, two divisions of the Soviet Union army came into Budapest, precipitating direct military conflicts between the Soviet Union troops and the Hungarian people.

At the critical juncture when confrontations were perpetually intensifying, the political changes were also becoming kaleidoscopic. On the same day of the intervention of Soviet troops, two special envoys of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Suslov and Anastas Mikoyan arrived in Budapest with the commission to examine the situation. On October 25, in a Politburo meeting, Nagy officially assumed the role of the Prime Minister of Hungary, and due to Gerő's inadequate response to the situation in Budapest, János Kádár succeeded him as the First Secretary of the Central Committee. On October 27, Nagy started to introduce non-communists into the cabinet. The next day, the Nagy government officially objected to defining the uprising as a counterrevolutionary event and instructed the interior force to cease the crossfire with the mass. When Suslov and Mikoyan returned from Budapest on October 28, the situation in Hungary was still making the senior leaders of the Soviet Union oscillate.

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<sup>155</sup> Heather Campbell, "Imre Nagy," Britannica, accessed January 16, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Imre-Nagy>.



On October 30, the Soviet Union issued a declaration in which it admitted that the equal relation between socialist countries had been infringed upon and expressed the willingness to negotiate with the Hungarian government on the resident Soviet Union troops in Hungary. On the same date, the Soviet Union troops began to withdraw from Budapest, and the establishment of a new multi-party cabinet led by Nagy was in the pipeline. The uprising appeared to have achieved its goal.<sup>156</sup>

Nevertheless, fearing that the Nagy government would diminish the Soviet Union's influence in Hungary and that the Western powers might take the chance to interfere in Eastern European affairs following their military intrusion in Egypt, the Soviet Union eventually changed its attitude towards the withdrawal.<sup>157</sup> On November 1, massive Soviet Union forces advanced towards the Hungarian border. The troops that had once withdrawn from Budapest were instructed to take up positions at the city's outskirts to construct defences.

Completely shocked by the Soviet action, the Nagy government adopted hard-line diplomatic means in response to Soviet Union's military action. In the letter dated November 2 from Imre Nagy to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Prime Minister expressed the government's wish to negotiate with the Soviet Union concerning the execution of the termination of the Treaty of Warsaw. He requested the Secretary-General to call upon great powers to recognise the neutrality of Hungary.<sup>158</sup>

Nagy's threatening to withdraw from the Treaty of Warsaw was utterly insufferable to the Soviet Union, leading the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to give up on the Nagy government and turn to the preparation of a new government led by János Kádár. Subsequently, the General Assembly convened its 2<sup>nd</sup> Emergency Special Session to discuss the situation in Hungary.

Although five resolutions were passed during the session, no practical actions were taken regarding either the support for the Hungary government or the censure of the Soviet Union's interference in Hungary's internal affairs in the documents. More emphasis was placed on appeals to halt the Soviet Union's military operations and provide necessary humanitarian aid to the Hungarian population.<sup>159</sup>

On November 4, Kádár declared to establish the Hungarian Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Government. Constrained by the adverse political situation, Nagy, along with several core cabinet members in the Hungary government, sought political asylum in the Yugoslav Embassy in Hungary. On the same day, five divisions of the Soviet Union Army were welcomed into Hungary by the Kádár government.<sup>160</sup> The troops soon crushed the uprising and took control of the situation within several days.<sup>161</sup>

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156 侯凤菁：《1956年匈牙利事件与东欧剧变》，《俄罗斯中亚东欧研究》，2006年第5期，第21-23页。

157 沈志华：《冷战期间苏联与东欧关系》，北京大学出版社，2006年，第160-161页。

158 UN Security Council, Letter dated 2 November 1956, to the Secretary-General from the President of the Council of Ministers and Acting Foreign Minister of the Hungarian People's Republic, S/3726, 119(No. 22, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/S/3726>.

159 UN General Assembly, Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during its second emergency special session from 4 to 10 November 1956, A/3355, 2-3(1956), <https://undocs.org/en/A/3355>.

160 侯凤菁：《1956年匈牙利事件与东欧剧变》，第23页。

161 沈志华：《冷战期间苏联与东欧的关系》，第163页。

The Hungarian uprising ended in tragedy, with 2700 casualties, more than 6300 sentenced by the Hungary authority, and approximately 200,000 rendered displaced and forced to seek refuge in neighbouring countries including Austria and Yugoslavia.<sup>162 163</sup> The event not only left a huge impact on the Hungarian people but also had many repercussions on the global situation following the Suez Crisis, especially concerning the relations between the Soviet Union and the Eastern European Countries.

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162 Ibid.

163 UNHCR, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, A/3828/Rev.1, 2(1958), <https://undocs.org/en/A/3828/Rev.1>.

# Related International Law and Institutions

## I. Principle of Sovereign Equality of States

The principle of sovereign equality of states is not only one of the important principles of traditional international law, but also one of the significant principles of contemporary international law. Even though various states differ in aspects such as territorial area, population size, economic strength, military strength and cultural quality, but the principle of sovereign equality of states is one of the most reiterated principles of modern international law by the international community. No matter the United Nations, other regional international organisations, or the superpower like United States of America, they all include, without exception, the principle of the sovereign equality of states in their adopted documents, which concern the fundamental principles of relations between states, and even consider it as the primary one among the principles.<sup>164</sup>

This principle can be traced back as far as the norms of international relations in the 17th and 18th centuries. But during that time, it was still vague and didn't accepted by all countries in the world. In modern international legal documents, it was clearly stated and gradually agreed by all members. At the Moscow meeting in October 1943, during the preparation process of the United Nations, national sovereign equality was explicitly recognized as a principle. The governments of Republic of China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States have recognized in the Universal Security Declaration that they should establish a universal international organisation based on the principle of equality of sovereignty over all countries who love peace, and all of these countries, regardless of their size, must join as members. Through the Dumbarton Oaks Proposal, the principle of national sovereign equality has been confirmed and guaranteed in the UN Charter.<sup>165</sup>

As mentioned, support for the principle was clearly expressed in the former Soviet Union almost from the founding stages of the principle. In 1946 at the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission, the Soviet representative interpreted this principle in this way: "The principle of sovereignty is one of the cornerstones on which the United Nations organisation is based. If it is touched, the entire existence and future of the United Nations will be threatened." According to the representative of the Soviet Union, the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms the sovereign equality of all countries. It means that all countries are equal. Each country participates in international relations on an equal basis, **but the principle of sovereign equality cannot be understood absolutely and metaphysically.** Legal equality in international relations is not an abstract equality, nor does it mean that the rights and obligations of each country are absolutely the same in international relations. **The principle of sovereign equality should be understood dialectically,** and it does not preclude certain countries from having the privileges stipulated in the Charter.<sup>166</sup>

<sup>164</sup> Zewei Yang, "The Legal Effect of the Principle of Sovereign Equality of States", 武汉大学国际法研究所, last modified 18 October 2018, accessed 8 February 2023. <http://translaw.whu.edu.cn/en/index.php/index-view-aid-679.html>

<sup>165</sup> *ibid*

<sup>166</sup> Zewei Yang, "The Legal Effect of the Principle of Sovereign Equality of States," Law and Business Research, No. 1, 2003.

As this principle is widely recognized, therefore, when the USSR “invaded” Hungary twice in October and November 1956, most countries condemned its action. However, there was a debate as to whether this act violates the principle of sovereign equality of states. The People's Republic of China, for example, explicitly expressed its support for Soviet intervention at a conference and called Imre Nagy's act of reform an act of defection of the same nature as Wang Jingwei's. The Soviet intervention was also invited by the new government of Kádár János, and therefore its actions themselves were somewhat contradictory.<sup>167</sup>

However, when the Great Britain and France sent troops to Egypt, they were undoubtedly violated the Principle of Sovereign Equality of States, this was closely related to their isolation and irrelevance in the international community, and even the United States has strongly condemned their actions.

## II. Principle of Non-Intervention of Internal Affairs

The principle of non-intervention of internal affairs, also known as the principle of non-intervention, is one of the basic principles of international law recognized by all countries. During the Suez Crisis, there has been some UN documents to state and clarify this principle. As a fundamental principle of contemporary international law, it has been mainly concentrated in Article 2, clause 7 of the UN Charter, which stipulates that:

“Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorise the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.”<sup>168</sup>

The above-mentioned clause is established as a principle of the UN Charter and at the same time is the most important element of the fundamental principle of non-interference in internal affairs in contemporary international law. This clause implies that non-States parties also have the right to ensure that their internal affairs are not interfered with by the United Nations.<sup>169</sup> In 1956, this was the most authoritative clause people had about the principle of Non-Intervention of Internal Affairs.

Later, this principle has been reaffirmed and further elaborated by the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, including *the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of Their Independence and Sovereignty*, adopted by the General Assembly in 1965, the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States, and the Declaration on the Enhancement of the Effectiveness of the Principle of Refraining from the Threat or Use of Force in International Relations adopted by the General Assembly in 1970, 1981 and 1987.<sup>170</sup>

167 李伯军：《不干涉内政原则研究》，博士论文，武汉大学国际法学系，2005年4月，16。

168 “United Nations Charter, Chapter I: Purposes and Principles,” United Nations, accessed 8 February 2023, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-1>.

169 李伯军：《不干涉内政原则研究》，博士论文，武汉大学国际法学系，2005年4月，2。

170 陈一峰：《不干涉原则作为习惯国际法之证明方法》，《法学家》，2012年第5期，第153-156页。

Here we would like to introduce the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (the Declaration on Principles of International Law) adopted by the General Assembly specifically<sup>171</sup>, which was recognized as the authoritative statement of the principle of non-intervention in international law. According to the Declaration of Principles of International Law, the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs includes the following aspects: First, "Every state has the inalienable right to choose its political, economic, social and cultural system without interference of any kind from other states". Secondly, "No State or group of States has the right to interfere directly or indirectly, for any reason whatsoever, in the internal or foreign affairs of any other State"; "Armed intervention and all other forms of interference or attempted threats against the personality of a state or its political, economic and cultural elements are contrary to international law". Thirdly, "No state shall use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another state in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights and to secure from it advantages of any kind"; "No state shall organize, assist, instigate, finance, encourage or tolerate acts aimed at the violent overthrow of the regime of another state.

Although the principle of non-interference is a fundamental principle of international law recognized by all countries, it is a principle that is often violated in practice. During the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, The Soviet Union was regarded violated this principle by western governments and scholars.<sup>172</sup>

### III. Government Recognition

*Government recognition* refers to the situation where the pre-existing countries recognise the new government of another country as the official representative of that country and express willingness to establish or maintain normal relations with it.<sup>173</sup> Generally speaking, government recognition occurs when there is a change of governments caused by non-constitutional means, including revolution or coup; if a new government is formed by legal means, it will not associate with the situation of government recognition.<sup>174</sup>

Government recognition can lead to the following legal effects:

First, the foundation for establishing diplomatic relations between the pre-existing countries and the government recognised will be laid;

Second, the recognised government's international legal rights and obligations, such as state immunity, diplomatic immunity, right of representation in international organisations, etc., will be henceforth respected;

Third, the recognition of the old government alongside any legal rights based on government recognition will be automatically terminated and withdrawn;

<sup>171</sup> "Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations", 联合国数字图书馆, last modified 1971, accessed 8 February 2023, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/202170>

<sup>172</sup> MAZIAR JAMNEJAD and MICHAEL WOOD, "The Principle of Non-intervention", *Leiden Journal of International Law*, Volume 22, Issue 2, 1 June 2009, 345 - 381.

<sup>173</sup> 周鲠生：《国际法》（上），商务印书馆，1976年，第127页。

<sup>174</sup> 黄长生：《论国家承认和政府承认的性质》，《国际关系学院学报》，1999年第2期，第6页。

Fourth, the act of recognition will have a retroactive effect, the legal rights or obligations of the recognised country will be retroactively deemed effective from the date of establishment of the new government.<sup>175</sup>

It is necessary for a new government established through non-constitutional means including revolutions or coups to be recognised by the international community to establish its diplomatic relations with other countries and fully enjoy other rights in accordance with international law. Nevertheless, there are also situations where a new government cannot be recognised by pre-existing countries, for example, where the new government is yet to exercise effective control over the country's territory or where the pre-existing countries consider that it is yet to be an appropriate time to recognise the new government.

Regarding the situation in the Hungarian uprising, the issue of government recognition occurred when Kádár's government, the Hungarian Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Government, was established on 4 November 1956. For one thing, the Kádár government telephoned Secretary-General Hammarskjöld, declaring that all previous requests made by Nagy to the United Nations were rendered invalid and that the situation in Hungary should not be discussed in UN conferences.<sup>176</sup> For another, the new government claimed to approve of the Soviet Union's second military intervention upon its establishment, which rapidly led to the harsh crush of the uprising.

Both the two actions taken by the new government are concerned with the issue of government recognition. Although having declared its establishment, the Kádár government was yet to be recognised by the pre-existing countries other than the Soviet Union when taking these actions; correspondingly, the recognition for Nagy's government was yet to be terminated and withdrawn. Therefore, the new government was yet to be identified as the sole legal government of Hungary to most of the countries and the United Nations by 4 November, remaining doubtful whether the new government's diplomatic actions were in accordance with international law.

This controversy led to debates between the West, especially the United States, and the Soviet Union in the United Nations. At meetings in the second Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly, the Soviet Union insisted that the Nagy government had resigned. The new Kadar government was the legal government of Hungary, thus rendering invalid the previous requests of the Nagy government, including Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, the intervention of the United Nations, and the neutrality of Hungary; the United Nations should not interfere with the internal affairs of Hungary by discussing the situation in Hungary.<sup>177</sup> The United States, on the other hand, argued that Kádár, along with his government, was a "strawman" and "puppet clique" installed by the Soviet Union to justify its military intervention and that the rights of representation in the United Nations of the Kadar government should not be recognised.<sup>178</sup>

175 罗国强：《政府承认的性质及其所适用的原则》，《山西大学学报（哲学社会科学版）》，2017年9月，第40卷，第5期，第101页。

176 沈志华：《冷战时期苏联与东欧的关系》，北京大学出版社，2006年1月，第164页。

177 沈志华：《冷战时期苏联与东欧的关系》，第164页。

178 UN General Assembly, General Assembly official records, 2nd emergency special session: 564th plenary meeting, Sunday, 4 November 1956, New York, A/PV.564, ¶ 71-73(Nov. 4, 1956), <https://undocs.org/>

<sup>179</sup> In a draft resolution, the United States endorsed, the General Assembly shall take note of the Nagy government's requests and intervene in Hungarian affairs and the Secretary-General to cope with the grave situation.<sup>180</sup>

Consequently, in Resolution 1004 (ES-I) and Resolution 1005 (ES-I), the United Nations General Assembly appealed to the cessation of the Soviet's intervention in Hungarian affairs and paid respect to the Hungarian people's rights to have a government freely elected and representing their national aspirations.<sup>181</sup> <sup>182</sup> With the situation continuing to deteriorate and the Kadar government taking the responsibility to restore order in Hungary, the focus of the Emergency Special Session was placed on providing international aid to the Hungarian people. The United Nations, however, postponed making any decision upon the legal status of the Kadar government in the United Nations under the influence of the West, and it was not until 1962, when the situation in Hungary was removed from the General Assembly's Agenda, that the problem of government recognition for the Kadar government has been settled.<sup>183</sup>

#### IV. Warsaw Pact

The Warsaw Pact (WP) or Treaty of Warsaw, formally the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, was a collective defense treaty signed in Warsaw, Poland, between the Soviet Union and seven other Eastern Bloc socialist republics of Central and Eastern Europe in May 1955, during the Cold War. The term "Warsaw Pact" commonly refers to both the treaty itself and its resultant defensive alliance, the Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO). The Warsaw Pact was the military complement to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), the regional economic organisation for the socialist states of Central and Eastern Europe. The Warsaw Pact was created in reaction to the integration of West Germany into the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1955 as per the London and Paris Conferences of 1954.<sup>184</sup>

Dominated by the Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact was established as a balance of power or counterweight to NATO. Both NATO and the Warsaw Pact led to the expansion of

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en/A/PV.564

179 沈志华：《冷战时期苏联与东欧的关系》，第 164 页。

180 UN General Assembly, General Assembly official records, 2nd emergency special session: 564th plenary meeting, Sunday, 4 November 1956, New York, A/PV.564, ¶ 74(Nov. 4, 1956), <https://undocs.org/en/A/PV.564>

181 UN General Assembly, Resolution 1004(ES-I), Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during its 2nd emergency special session from 4 to 10 November 1956, A/3355, 2-3(1956), <https://undocs.org/en/A/3355>.

182 UN General Assembly, Resolution 1005(ES-I), Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during its 2nd emergency special session from 4 to 10 November 1956, A/3355, 2-3(1956), <https://undocs.org/en/A/3355>.

183 沈志华：《冷战时期苏联与东欧的关系》，第 164 页。

184 Broadhurst, Arlene Idol. *The Future of European Alliance Systems*. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press,1982). 137.

military forces and their integration into the respective blocs.<sup>185</sup> One of the fundamental reasons that the Soviet Union sent troops to Hungary during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 is that the Imre Nagy's government declared that Hungary wishes to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, that seriously angered the Soviet Union.

## V. Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary

Until January 1957, the Soviet Union had not followed the reaffirms from the United Nations and still carried out military moves. A considerable of Hungarians suffered, and the military intervention launched by the USSR seriously infringed on the rights of Hungarian internal affairs. In response to the resolutions passed during the second Emergency Special Session, a valid and neutral organisation or authority was urgently needed to be a spectator for frontier hearings from Hungary and then provide factual and accurate information, as well as scientific and feasible proposals.<sup>186 187</sup> That way, it was easier to push State Members together based on useful reports, fighting against injustice or external military intervention in Hungary.

Faced with a dilemma, the Secretary-General, Dag Hjalmar Agne Carl Hammarskjöld, took both his responsibility and his representative's rejection of Hungarian territory into consideration, determined to solve the Hungarian problem with a new perspective. He appealed to establish a specific committee for refugees in Hungary, effectively avoiding the Soviet stubbornness to some degree.<sup>188</sup>

Theoretically, it was unsuitable for forming such a committee out of sympathy because the UN always served as a platform to negotiate international affairs. However, some western countries seized this opportunity to go against the Soviet Union. For instance, the delegate from the USA provided confirmed support for this proposal and persuaded others to participate. Those non-aligned countries were also involved in pursuing liberation under great power. In addition, it had become a consensus that the Soviet Union was to blame. Consequently, many counties agreed to set up such a special committee, though for various considerations from different dimensions.

Born in January 1957, Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary made sense, as expected in most cases. Firstly, it brought the approximate statistics and actual situation of the war. Secondly, it acted as a supervisor of the implementation of resolutions conducted by the UN. What is more, this official committee of the UN was capable of propagating news that could shape public opinion and put significant pressure on the USSR with condemnation and objectiveness.<sup>189</sup>

<sup>185</sup> Amos Yoder, *Communism in Transition: The End of the Soviet Empires*. (Taylor & Francis, 1993). 58

<sup>186</sup> UN General Assembly, Resolution 1132(XI), Question Considered by the 2nd emergency special session of the General Assembly from 4 to 10 November 1956, A/RES/1132(XI), 1 (Jan. 10, 1957), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1132\(XI\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1132(XI)).

<sup>187</sup> UN General Assembly, Resolution 1131(XI), Question Considered by the 2nd emergency special session of the General Assembly from 4 to 10 November 1956, A/RES/1131(XI), 1 (Dec. 12, 1956), [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1131\(XI\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1131(XI)).

<sup>188</sup> Eliav Lieblich, "At Least Something: The UN Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary, 1957-1958(December 18, 2018)," 30 *European Journal of International Law* 843 (2019), 845-850.

<sup>189</sup> Theodore G. Mitau, *American Slavic and East European Review* 17, no. 2 (1958): 245-47, <https://doi>.



Nevertheless, the special committee was composed of representatives from State Members instead of individuals, which might need to be more balanced between the delegate's different identifications as a generous individual and also an official representative of a country, limiting the impacts and effectiveness of the committee.<sup>190</sup>

Notwithstanding some imperfections or various intentions, this move was regarded as an endeavour because it was remarkable trying to solve Hungary's problem and, indeed, urged the USSR to withdraw. The efforts made by the UN and the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary count.

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org/10.2307/3004178.

190 Eliav Lieblich, "At Least Something: The UN Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary, 1957-1958(December 18, 2018)," 30 *European Journal of International Law* 843 (2019), 845-850.

# Bloc Positions

## I. USSR and Eastern European Countries

It is believed that the USSR was the prime mover in the 1956 Hungary event, and other Eastern European countries were its passive allies. At the same time, evidence showed that the Soviet leaders were not the only ones fearing the unravelling of the Warsaw Pact and the spreading of anti-communist ideas across their borders. For instance, the Czechoslovakian and Romanian leaders reported widespread unrest in their own countries during the Hungary uprising.

As the Soviet control over its satellite states grew more and more compelling due to the need for US-Soviet contend, the Soviet communist system was increasingly rigid to match their domestic situations. This trend, along with Khrushchev's anti-Stalin policies, including his "secret speech" in February 1956, had fueled the de-Stalinisation within the Eastern European countries.<sup>191</sup> Poland and Hungary were typical examples of Warsaw Pact countries revolting against Soviet influence.

Shocked and outraged by the events in Hungary, the USSR decided to intervene militarily in Hungary for fear of not maintaining its powerful position in Eastern Europe and letting Western forces in the area. To glamorise its operation, the Soviet leader claimed that he appreciated the efforts made by the Hungarian people to eliminate the shortcomings of the national economic organisation, whereas many facts had indicated that the movement was utilised by ill-intentioned forces which would cause harm to the democratic system.<sup>192</sup> Therefore, the action of the USSR was necessary to preserve the socialist system, and the presence of Soviet forces in Hungary was protecting the security of all States and Parties of the Warsaw Pact rather than breaking it.

Khrushchev himself also implied that the cause of the Suez Canal crisis had something to do with Russia and Hungary's problems, and the so-called imperialists were not directly involved but had been capitalising on the timing to intervene in Egypt and the Middle East; thus, the immediate move would safeguard the possession of its influence sphere.<sup>193</sup>

Despite its strong statement, the USSR faced significant criticism and international voices for sanctions. Both countries from the NATO bloc and countries that were non-aligned condemned the USSR for breaking the Peace Treaty and suppressing the Hungarian people's efforts to reassert their rights.

Nevertheless, given that it took great cost to quell such intense and widespread revolts and that the United States or other Western countries showed no interest in joining, the USSR agreed on the cease-fire and retreated its military on 28th October.

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<sup>191</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Records of meetings 564, A/PV.564, 1(Nov. 4, 1956), <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/NL3/000/27/PDF/NL300027>.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>193</sup> Granville, Johanna Cushing, "Soviet decision-making: A comparative analysis of the interventions in Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Afghanistan (1979)", University Microfilms International, 1991, 84.

## II. Western Countries

The US and the USSR's hegemony over international influence had sharpened after World War II, especially in the competition for the Middle East. When the Eisenhower government was in office for the first time, he devised the "rollback" and "liberation" slogans to lessen the USSR's influence in the Eastern world.<sup>194</sup> In fear of expanding the war into European scope or affecting the relationship between Khrushchev and the States, the US had taken the silent policy at first, indicating the US would not involve in the situation, whether privately or publicly. As the situation escalated alongside the enlarging casualty number, the US sensed less threat of the USSR stuck in a dilemma and started to condemn the moves of the USSR in public. At the same time, the US declared its non-involvement ever in the revolt to ease the actions of the USSR, hoping to strengthen its influence and take control of international opinion.

By saving its military force and denouncing the interference in Hungary's domestic affairs of the USSR, the US and its allies, including the UK and France, gained the advantage in encouraging the United Nations to take action against the USSR. Hungary's situation had impaired the USSR's govern over Eastern Europe and, on the contrary, weakened its competitiveness in the US-Soviet bipolar world.

When the Hungarian people were bleeding to reshape domestic politics under pressure from home and abroad, the United Kingdom and France placed most of their attention on the Middle East and the Suez Canal. Therefore, when the situation of Hungary was brought up in the agenda of the second emergency special session, they were pleased with the shift of international focus to Eastern Europe, indicating less obstruction in retrieving their rights in Egypt and the Middle East.

The United Kingdom pointed out that the purpose of the USSR was to impose a puppet government in Hungary and emphasised the importance of the UN in the peacekeeping of the Middle East. The UK refused to compare the Hungary situation to the Middle East situation, claiming that the USSR had interfered in the internal affairs of Hungary and that the Hungarian people's rights to choose their government should be secured.<sup>195</sup> France also supported the UN's actions and urged the investigation and curbing of foreign intervention in Hungary.<sup>196</sup>

## III. Non-Aligned Countries

The non-aligned countries also played an essential role in the Hungary revolution, for example, Yugoslav. Khrushchev's rapprochement with Tito's Yugoslav in July 1955

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<sup>194</sup> Brian McCauley, "Hungary and Suez, 1956: The Limits of Soviet and American Power", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 16, No. 4, 1981, 779.

<sup>195</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Records of meetings 564, A/PV.564, 16(Nov. 4, 1956), <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/NL3/000/27/PDF/NL300027>.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid*, 20.

was a crucial step in his de-Stalinisation policy.<sup>197</sup> Yugoslav was the only independent communist state since the 1948 Moscow-Belgrade rift and was aloof from the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet bloc. Due to its unique struggle towards national liberation--against both fascist aggressors and traitors, Tito believed in the superiority of the "Yugoslav way", which was different from the traditional communist way. As for foreign policies, Tito actively peddled the third-path mode (between orthodox capitalism and Soviet communism) and successfully survived the crack of the Soviet-US contend.<sup>198</sup> Just like Khrushchev, Tito was caught off-guard by the 1956 situation in Hungary, specifically when the Hungarians' anti-Soviet mood shifted to an anti-communist mood.<sup>199</sup> In the first few months, journalists and diplomats from Yugoslav enthusiastically supported Hungary's endeavour to be independent of the Soviet influence, which also partly demonstrated Tito's idea of "alternative roads to communism". Nevertheless, Tito's attitude shifted as the situation became violent and gradually out of control in Hungary. He realised the potential risk of nationalism spillover in Yugoslav, a state composed of several ethnic and religious groups. That is why Yugoslav ended up supporting the Soviet use of military force against Hungary.

Other non-aligned countries mostly supported the principle of independence, which was the core concept of the Non-Aligned Movement in the 50s. They favoured the Hungarian people's rights and freedom and approved of the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Meanwhile, they stood in a relatively neutral position. Nonetheless, there were still countries that supported Soviet moves and voted no or abstention when it came to UN resolutions, like India, which valued the Soviet-India relation and acted in consideration of its interest.

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197 Johanna Granville, "Hungary, 1956: The Yugoslav Connection", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 3, 1998, 494.

198 *Ibid*, 495.

199 *Ibid*, 497.

## Questions to Consider

1. What important role did the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 play in the 1956 Suez Crisis?
2. How could the USSR reserve its influence in the Eastern Europe? To what extent did it need to change the system?
3. What role did the United Nations Security Council play during the Hungarian uprising?
4. What may be the consideration of the United States when it decided not to intervene in the Hungarian uprising? How had the reaction of the United States to the Hungarian Uprising influenced the international situation afterwards?
5. Other than the Suez Canal Convention of 1888, what else international agreements regarding the Suez Canal had been signed and put into effect before the Suez Crisis took place? What influence did those agreements have on the settlement of the Suez Crisis?
6. When there is threat to international peace and security, what concrete role can the collective security mechanism and the peacekeeping operation respectively play?

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