



NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Lake Erie International Model United Nations

**Northcoast High School Conference XXXI
March 30 - April 1, 2010**

CHAIRING STYLE

On behalf of the staff of the Lake Erie International Model United Nations Corporation, allow me to welcome you to Northcoast XXXI. I applaud you for selecting the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as your committee, one poised to deliberate on issues fundamental to the security and future of the entire world. Our work will be both challenging and rewarding. Together we will carve the future of an organization poised for great change through astounding possibilities.

As the President, I bring forth a lengthy history with Model United Nations to allow me to effectively facilitate the agenda of a fast paced and hard working committee. As a delegate I always held myself to the highest standard, and as a chairman I hold my committee to the very same standard.

In order to accomplish the important work that we must, it is fundamentally important that all delegates are decidedly proficient in the Rules of Procedure, which are found under the research heading at www.leimun.com. Be aware that one major point sets NATO apart from other committees, the requirement of unanimity on substantive matters. That is, on all communiqués (the NATO term for substantive legislation similar to a resolution) all members must vote in the affirmative. With all this in mind, it is understandable that delegates will have differing degrees of experience. This conference is first and foremost educational, so please do not hesitate to rise to a Point of Information if you become confused, so that I can provide clarity. I believe that as the President, it is my role to guide and facilitate debate rather than actively partake in policy articulation, but I reserve the right to do so when I deem it prudent. Punctuality is mandatory, lateness will be severely reflected in the evaluations. Dressing, speaking, and acting professional are all imperative to the diplomatic process. All delegates are expected to be well researched on the nature of the body, their representative countries, and the topics of debate. To this end, please become very familiar with the website of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, www.nato.int. All of these factors will be taken into account in your evaluations and scores. For more information about the evaluative process, please consult the Conference Handbook. Most importantly, respect one another and respect the staff members. Only through a mutual respect will we achieve our true goal of shaping a better world.

As strict as this may sound, I am committed to your experience being both enlightening and highly enjoyable. If we enjoy our time together, we will have in the end made a greater impact.

THE TOPICS

Developing Sound Strategic Defense Policies

Strategic defense during the Cold War was a relatively basic issue for NATO. That is not to say that it was basic in the sense of being uncomplicated, indeed NATO strategic defense was a huge and multifaceted set of policies and actions centered upon the reinforcement of a huge defensive umbrella. It was basic, however, in the sense that it was relatively easy to identify that which needed to be protected against. The virtual arms race between the Warsaw Pact and NATO was symmetrical and simplistic to understand. Both sides had similar defenses and their defense technology evolved over time at a relatively similar rate.

The conclusion of the Cold War shifted the focus of NATO strategic defense. The threat of nuclear war, though still existing in some regard to be sure, has been severely lessened. The issue that now faces the organization is the necessity to identify the proper localities and types of installations that are fitting for the promotion of a legitimate strategic policy. The United States has exhibited interest in developing a new strategic nuclear installation in Poland, an issue of much ire for the Russian government, who views the action as overly aggressive and threatening.

The broader NATO strategic policy has, since 1999, emphasized conflict prevention and crisis management. While this has been effective in large part, it is time for a reevaluation of the broader strategic plan in general, and of the specific strategic defense initiatives. The emergence of NATO involvement in the Middle East has necessitated an evaluation of strategic defense policy beyond the borders of Europe, begging the question of whether or not current NATO policy is effective to promote the organization's new role in global peacekeeping. The expanded range of responsibilities, coupled with the actual expansion of NATO membership, requires changes. In addition, the reintegration of the French military into the NATO military framework requires an assessment of how to involve the French forces, one of the largest militaries in the entire alliance. With all of these factors in mind, the organization must develop a new set of policies that compliment the changing role of NATO in the 21st century and the changing face of global geopolitics.

Questions to Consider:

1. Has your country contributed lately to any NATO military operations?
2. Is your country primarily a contributor to or a benefactor of the NATO security umbrella? That is, does your country participate in NATO more to assist in the protection of other states or because it lacks a large comprehensive military of its own?
3. What outside factors are new to NATO's frame of reference and how must they be evaluated?
4. How should the new strategic concept incorporate the increasingly present existence of the terrorism phenomenon.

Recommended Research Links

<http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/index.html>

http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/rethinking-natos-strategic-concept

<http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/issues/nato-nuclear-policies/index.htm>

http://www.nato.int/issues/missile_defence/index.html

<http://www.cfr.org/publication/16619/>

Reexamining NATO's Role in the 21st Century

Since NATO was founded in 1949, the changes that have occurred both internally and around the world have been extreme. Founded by 12 states of Western Europe and North America, the membership now numbers 28 and stretches across the European continent well into the Russian borderlands.

The zenith, as it were, of NATO was the Cold War, a period categorized by a harsh duality. That is, NATO was necessary because of the Cold War, but the Cold War existed, in part, because of NATO. Harsh tensions between NATO and the Warsaw Pact nations necessitated a mutual defense pact of the Western nations. The countries of Western Europe needed American military protection and the United States had a strategic need for military installations in Europe as part of its defense policy. An exception to this rule was the French, who believed in the necessity for developing their own independent defense policy and nuclear deterrent outside of the NATO framework (while still remaining a member of the alliance officially).

The end of the Cold War brought about a kind of identity crisis for NATO. The longtime enemy had vanished, and with it the longstanding NATO strategic policies were rendered largely obsolete. Indeed, many of the former constituents of the Warsaw Pact have been absorbed into NATO.

NATO intervened broadly in the Balkans, mostly with relation to the (now defunct) Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Operation Sharp Guard, 1993-1996, enforced the arms embargo and economic sanctions against the Yugoslav government. Operation Deliberate Force (1995) was undertaken to stop the Srebrenica Genocide in Bosnia. Other such interventions occurred throughout the 1990s.

The strengthening of the European Union is inherently related to the development of NATO, as they share a common geographic area and many mutual members. Economic growth throughout the 1990s across Europe served to strengthen NATO's capacity to provide aid, as well as increased the potential role for members other than the United States and the United Kingdom to take on leadership capacities.

The September 11th attacks on the United States caused the alliance to invoke Article V of its charter for the first time in its history, which states that an attack on any member shall be regarded as an attack on all. Regardless of this immediate show of solidarity, turmoil was brought about by the US intention of expanding the war in the Middle East into Iraq. Direct NATO participation was vetoed by the French and Belgian delegations. No matter, NATO continues to participate fully in the Afghan effort.

The pressing question facing the organization in the second decade of the 21st century is to reevaluate the role of the alliance for the future. With the Cold War at an end, the factors that seek to undermine the security of the membership are now vastly different and asymmetrical. With seemingly impending showdowns with countries like Iran and North Korea, increasing levels of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism in the Middle East and across the world, and omnipresent security issues in Africa, the organization must develop a new policy that can ensure the security of its members and promotion of its core values.

Questions to Consider:

1. How has your government's participation in NATO changed since the end of the Cold War?

2. Is your county an active participant in NATO military operations?
3. Should the organization promote expansion further, or should it focus on the protection of its current core membership?
4. Does the increasing power of the European Union serve to reinforce or nullify the necessity of NATO?

Recommended Research Links:

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1889320,00.html>

http://www.acus.org/event_blog/reforming-nato-21st-century

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=12348>

NATO-Russian Relations

Relations between NATO and Moscow have had a storied past. NATO began as a mutual defense agreement between the democracies of the West against the Communist world under the Soviet sphere of influence. In 1955, the Communist states of Eastern Europe aligned themselves through the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance, commonly known as the Warsaw Pact. Throughout the Cold War relations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact were tumultuous. While direct open warfare never occurred between the two entities, dealings in other global conflicts coupled with an arms race of unparalleled proportions guaranteed a continually tense state of affairs.

Following the fall of the Iron Curtain and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, a new Russia was challenged with the necessity to carve out its new identity in global geopolitics, and with it other states were inclined to reevaluate their position toward Moscow. On one hand, it behooved the members of NATO to cultivate new and cordial relations with Russia, but on the other the matter of trust was not one that was just easily overcome through an altering of a constitution. Nevertheless, the disintegration of the Soviet Union ushered in the birth of a new era in global power politics.

The new era of NATO-Russian relations began in 1991 with the founding of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (later to become the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council) and was reinforced by Russia joining the Partnership for Peace program in 1994. In 1997, both parties signed the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security – which served as a road map for future cooperation between the Russian Federation and NATO. Finally, the creation of the NATO-Russia Council in 2002 has brought about an official diplomatic framework for dealing with security concerns and joint projects. Indeed, there is a valuable framework in place for the promotion of strong relations between both parties.

While much has been done in the direction of mutual cooperation, many issues remain. The eastward expansion of NATO is seen by many in the Russian power sphere to be a threat to its inherent sovereignty. For example, NATO and Russia are at odds regarding the Georgian question. That is, while the Russian government has given diplomatic recognition to South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states, NATO has been steadfast in its recognition of only a greater Georgia. Similarly, whereas Georgia and Ukraine have been invited to join NATO, the Russian government is in steadfast opposition. From Moscow, the expansion of NATO is viewed in terms of a simultaneous shrinking of the Russian sphere of influence. The proposition of the United States to introduce a missile defense system in Central Europe has served only to heighten tensions between NATO and the Russian Federation.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization must reevaluate its policy toward Russian cooperation for the next decade and beyond. While it is important that NATO policy steadfastly supports the sovereignty and security of its own members, it should be cognizant of the concerns of the Russian government. While the membership of the alliance is paramount, an unfriendly Russia does not serve to improve global relations.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the status of relations between your country and the Russian Federation?
2. What should be changed institutionally to more broadly incorporate the Russian government into official NATO deliberations?
3. Is there a certain ceiling to NATO-Russian Relations? That is, can there only ever be a certain level of cooperation between the two? If so, has that maximum been met?
4. Is the potential movement toward the instillation of a missile system in Central Europe counterproductive, that is, will it only lead to a Russian response that could bring about a new arms race?
5. What kinds of internal and regional geographic and geopolitical factors tie into the crafting of policy by either party?

Recommended Research Links:

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

<http://www.nato.int/issues/NATO-russia/index.html>

http://www.un.int/russia/new/MainRoot/index_plain.html

http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/081110_smith_natorussia_web.pdf