

20-21-22 September, 2024

# MUNSA'24

**Historical United Nations  
Security Council**

**Agenda Item:  
The Gulf War**



# HUNSC

**REACH TO THE FUTURE, SHAPE THE TOMORROW'S WORLD**

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# 1. Letter From Secretary General

Esteemed participants of the Model United Nations Conference of Sakıp Sabancı Anatolian High School 2024,

It is with great pleasure and honor that I extend this invitation to you all to join us for the 4th annual session of MUNSA in İstanbul, Türkiye. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake disasters faced by our country, we are excited to announce that we are gearing up for what promises to be our best session yet, scheduled to take place from September 20th to 22th, 2024.

As Secretary General, I am deeply privileged to be a part of a conference that upholds the values of education, excellence, and collaboration. Working alongside a team of incredibly talented individuals, I am enthusiastic about organizing an event that truly showcases the essence of our club. Our conference offers a diverse array of committees, including engaging crisis committees and a variety of topics spanning different time periods and regions.

Just like every year, this year's conference is being organized by SSAL MUN Club too. Our club's academic and organizational teams are working tirelessly to bring you the best MUN conference you've ever experienced. We believe that our conference will not only provide you with three unforgettable days but also significantly enhance your academic and personal development.

This year's MUNSA will feature 9 unique committees, each led by a team of passionate people. With that being said, the tenacious team of MUNSA'24, promises to challenge delegates to engage and think critically. Through our General Assembly committees GA1: DISEC and GA3: SOCHUM, two cooperation organizations which are the OIC and G-20, the main body and the most important committee of UN which is UNSC, the mysterious BDNC and two crisis committees which are JCC and HCC; delegates will have access to a broad range of committee forms and topics. From this wide range of options, delegates have the opportunity to find a committee that fits their interests and matches their preferred style of debate.

To apply for MUNSA 2024, simply visit our website and register. Before doing so, I encourage you to explore our website, [munsakipsabanci.org](http://munsakipsabanci.org), where you can find detailed information about our team, registration deadlines, conference policies, and committees. Should you have any questions, feel free to reach out to our Public Relations team at [pr@munsakipsabanci.org](mailto:pr@munsakipsabanci.org).

On behalf of the Sakıp Sabancı Anatolian High School Model United Nations Club and the MUNSA'24 Team, I eagerly anticipate welcoming you all to our conference this September!

Habib Doğanay Dönmez  
Secretary General, MUNSA 2024

## 2. Introduction to the Committee

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the main principal organs of the United Nations (UN) and holds the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Established in 1945 following the conclusion of World War II, the UNSC plays a central role in global diplomacy, conflict resolution, and international security. Its decisions are legally binding for all UN member states, making it one of the most powerful and influential international institutions in existence today.

### The Structure of the UNSC

The Security Council is composed of 15 member states, divided into two categories:

#### **Permanent Members (P5):**

The UNSC includes five permanent members, often referred to as the "P5." These nations are:

- United States
- Russia (originally the Soviet Union, succeeded by Russia in 1991)
- China
- France
- United Kingdom

These countries hold veto power, meaning that any one of them can block the adoption of a substantive resolution, even if it has received the necessary votes from the broader Council. This veto power is a significant aspect of UNSC decision-making and has often been the subject of controversy due to its potential to stymie action on critical international issues.

#### **Non-Permanent Members:**

The remaining ten seats are filled by non-permanent members, who are elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms. These countries do not have veto power, but they contribute to the discussions and voting on various resolutions. Non-permanent members play an essential role in bringing diverse perspectives and regional concerns to the Council's attention.



# Functions and Powers of the UNSC

The Security Council holds several critical responsibilities under the UN Charter, particularly in areas related to the preservation of international peace and security. These include:

## **Conflict Prevention:**

The UNSC can investigate disputes or situations that may lead to international conflict. It can recommend mechanisms for resolving these disputes or impose diplomatic sanctions to prevent escalation.

## **Peacekeeping Operations:**

The UNSC is responsible for authorizing peacekeeping missions, deploying UN forces to conflict zones to monitor ceasefires, and protecting civilians. Peacekeeping operations are essential tools for stabilizing post-conflict environments and ensuring that peace agreements are upheld.

## **Sanctions:**

The Security Council has the authority to impose sanctions on nations, groups, or individuals that threaten international peace. These sanctions can include economic embargoes, arms restrictions, travel bans, and financial asset freezes.

## **Military Action:**

In extreme cases where diplomatic measures fail, the UNSC can authorize military intervention. This is considered a last resort and usually involves the creation of international coalitions to enforce peace through force.

## **War Crimes and Prosecutions:**

The Council has the power to establish international tribunals to prosecute war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Notably, it created the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

## **Approving UN Secretary-General:**

The Security Council plays a role in appointing the UN Secretary-General. Although the General Assembly formally elects the Secretary-General, the UNSC recommends candidates, and any permanent member's veto can block a candidate's nomination.

## Decision-Making Process

To pass a resolution, the UNSC requires at least nine out of the 15 members to vote in favor, including the concurring votes of all permanent members. This system ensures that decisions have broad support but can be hindered by the veto system. The requirement for consensus among the P5, in particular, often complicates decision-making on contentious issues, especially when permanent members have divergent national interests.

## The Veto Power and Its Controversy

The veto power held by the P5 is both a safeguard for ensuring consensus among the most powerful nations and a point of significant criticism. Since any one of these members can block substantive decisions, the veto has been used to halt action on critical global issues, such as military interventions or sanctions.

For instance, during the Cold War, the UNSC was frequently paralyzed by the competing interests of the United States and the Soviet Union, each wielding its veto to block the other's actions. In more recent years, vetoes have been used by Russia and China to block resolutions on the Syrian civil war, while the United States has used its veto power to shield Israel from certain resolutions.

Many critics argue that the veto system is undemocratic and limits the effectiveness of the UNSC, particularly in cases where humanitarian crises or violations of international law are at stake.

## Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Interventions

Peacekeeping operations authorized by the UNSC are among the most visible aspects of its work. The Council has deployed peacekeepers to conflict zones across the world, including in regions like Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. These missions, typically composed of military personnel from various UN member states, are tasked with monitoring ceasefires, protecting civilians, and supporting the implementation of peace agreements.

The UNSC's ability to authorize humanitarian interventions in conflict zones is critical in preventing mass atrocities. However, the Council has faced criticism for its inaction in certain

cases, such as the 1994 Rwandan genocide, where the failure to intervene led to devastating consequences.

## Reform of the UNSC

Given the geopolitical landscape of the 21st century, there is increasing pressure to reform the UNSC, particularly its structure and decision-making processes. The composition of the permanent members reflects the global power distribution at the end of World War II, which has changed significantly in recent decades.

Many countries, including emerging powers like India, Brazil, and South Africa, have called for expanding the Council's permanent membership to better reflect current global realities. There are also proposals to limit the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities or humanitarian crises.

Reform efforts, however, have made little progress due to the inherent difficulty of changing the structure of an organization where the current P5 holds veto power. For any reform to pass, it would need the approval of two-thirds of the General Assembly and all five permanent members, making substantial changes to the UNSC a challenging task.

### 3. Introduction to the Agenda Item

The Gulf War (1990-1991), also known as Operation Desert Storm, was a major international conflict that arose following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. Under the leadership of Saddam Hussein, Iraq sought to assert control over Kuwait, citing long-standing territorial disputes and accusing the small Gulf nation of overproducing oil and undercutting Iraqi revenues. The invasion was driven by both economic grievances—particularly Iraq's immense debt after the Iran-Iraq War—and Hussein's ambition to expand Iraq's regional influence. Kuwait's occupation was met with swift and near-universal condemnation from the international community, including the United Nations, which issued a series of resolutions demanding Iraq's withdrawal.

As Iraq continued its occupation, global fears of Saddam Hussein's growing power and control over a significant portion of the world's oil supply led to a large-scale military buildup in the region. Spearheaded by the United States, a coalition of 35 nations—including key allies such as the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, France, and Egypt—was formed to defend Kuwait and uphold international law. The coalition forces assembled the largest military operation since

World War II, with over 900,000 troops deployed to the region during Operation Desert Shield, a defensive phase aimed at protecting Saudi Arabia from possible Iraqi aggression.

Diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis failed as Hussein defied international demands, prompting the UN to authorize military action. On January 17, 1991, the coalition launched Operation Desert Storm, a massive and highly coordinated aerial and naval bombardment against Iraqi military targets and infrastructure. The air campaign, which lasted for more than a month, showcased the cutting-edge military technology of the time, including precision-guided missiles, stealth bombers, and satellite-guided systems. This relentless assault crippled Iraq's military capabilities and weakened its defensive positions.

On February 24, 1991, the coalition initiated a ground assault that quickly overwhelmed Iraqi forces, liberating Kuwait within four days. The war culminated in a decisive coalition victory, with Iraq suffering significant military and infrastructural losses. Despite the success of the military campaign, the conflict had far-reaching consequences. While Saddam Hussein remained in power, Iraq was subjected to strict UN sanctions, disarmament obligations, and no-fly zones that would continue for years.

The Gulf War reshaped geopolitical dynamics in the Middle East, highlighting the growing dominance of the United States in the post-Cold War world. It also exposed the vulnerability of the region to conflict over oil and resources. Although brief, the war left deep scars, including the devastation of Kuwait, the environmental catastrophe caused by Iraq's deliberate burning of Kuwaiti oil fields, and a humanitarian crisis within Iraq. The Gulf War set the stage for future tensions in the region, laying the groundwork for the eventual 2003 Iraq War and shaping U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East for decades to come.

## **The Path Leading to the Gulf War**

The **Gulf War** (1990-1991) was one of the most significant conflicts of the late 20th century, deeply rooted in historical, political, economic, and geopolitical factors that shaped the Middle East for decades. This article delves into the complex background of the Gulf War, exploring the historical context, Iraq's economic struggles, Saddam Hussein's political ambitions, and the role of oil in triggering the conflict.

### **Historical Context and Iraq-Kuwait Relations**

The tensions between Iraq and Kuwait have a long history, dating back to the early 20th century. In the aftermath of World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, modern-day Iraq and Kuwait were carved out by British colonial authorities. Iraq, which gained independence in 1932, long harbored ambitions of regional dominance, particularly under its post-1958 republican leadership. By contrast, Kuwait became fully independent from Britain in 1961.

One of the core issues between Iraq and Kuwait involved **territorial disputes**, especially over the shared border and control of the **Rumaila oil field**, a massive oil deposit straddling both nations. Iraq claimed that Kuwait, a much smaller but oil-rich nation, was historically part of its territory and that colonial powers had artificially separated the two. Tensions flared periodically throughout the 20th century, but it wasn't until 1990 that these disputes would spiral into open conflict.

### **Iraq's Economic Problems Post-Iran-Iraq War**

One of the key drivers behind Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was its dire economic situation in the aftermath of the **Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988)**. The eight-year war, which ended in a bloody stalemate, left Iraq in a precarious financial position. Iraq had borrowed heavily, amassing an external debt of over **\$80 billion**, with significant portions owed to Gulf Arab states like **Saudi Arabia** and **Kuwait**, which had financially supported Iraq's efforts against Iran.

Saddam Hussein expected that the Gulf states would forgive or significantly reduce Iraq's debt, given the role it had played in shielding them from the potential spread of Iranian influence. However, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia insisted that Iraq repay its debts, which placed enormous pressure on Iraq's already strained economy.

Additionally, Iraq's oil revenues were insufficient to cover its post-war reconstruction needs. Oil prices had declined sharply in the late 1980s due to **overproduction** by several OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) members, including Kuwait. Iraq accused Kuwait of deliberately driving down oil prices by exceeding OPEC production quotas, further damaging Iraq's fragile economy. This added to the already simmering tensions between the two nations.

### **Saddam Hussein's Political Ambitions**

Saddam Hussein's personal ambitions for regional dominance also played a crucial role in the lead-up to the Gulf War. Since becoming the de facto leader of Iraq in 1979, Hussein had sought to establish Iraq as a major power in the Middle East. He envisioned Iraq as the leader of the Arab world, particularly after Egypt's peace treaty with Israel in 1979, which weakened Cairo's leadership role in the region.

The Iran-Iraq War, though costly, reinforced Hussein's view of Iraq as a military and political force to be reckoned with. However, Iraq's debt-ridden economy and domestic unrest—fueled by years of war and economic hardship—threatened to undermine his rule. To consolidate his power and bolster his regime's standing, Hussein believed that taking aggressive action against Kuwait could resolve Iraq's economic problems and establish it as the dominant power in the Persian Gulf.



Seizing Kuwait, with its vast oil reserves, offered a quick solution to Iraq's financial woes. Moreover, the annexation of Kuwait would give Iraq control over nearly 20% of the world's proven oil reserves, dramatically increasing its leverage on the global stage. Saddam Hussein likely believed that the international community, particularly the United States, would not intervene militarily, given the perceived strategic importance of Iraq as a counterbalance to Iran in the region.

### **Oil and Geopolitical Tensions**

Oil, the lifeblood of the global economy, was a major factor in the Gulf War. Iraq and Kuwait both possessed vast oil reserves, and control over these resources was a key issue that contributed to the conflict. Throughout the 1980s, Kuwait had been expanding its oil production, often exceeding its OPEC quota. This led to a glut in the oil market and a sharp decline in prices, which was detrimental to Iraq's economy.

Iraq, heavily reliant on oil exports, viewed Kuwait's overproduction as a form of economic warfare. Saddam Hussein accused Kuwait of deliberately keeping oil prices low to weaken Iraq and prevent it from recovering economically after the Iran-Iraq War. Tensions escalated when Iraq demanded compensation from Kuwait for what it claimed were "stolen" revenues from the shared **Rumaila oil field**, further exacerbating the economic grievances between the two nations.

Beyond the Iraq-Kuwait relationship, the broader geopolitical importance of oil in the Persian Gulf region played a role in the international response to the conflict. Western nations, particularly the **United States**, had a vested interest in maintaining stability in the Gulf due to its critical role in global energy supplies. Any disruption in the flow of oil from the Gulf could have catastrophic effects on the world economy, which heightened the sense of urgency in addressing the brewing conflict.

### **The Lead-Up to Invasion: Diplomatic Tensions**

In the months leading up to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, diplomatic tensions between the two nations reached a boiling point. Despite various attempts by Arab nations and regional powers to mediate the dispute, Saddam Hussein continued to make increasingly aggressive demands of Kuwait. These included the cancellation of Iraq's war debt and compensation for oil revenues lost due to Kuwait's alleged theft from the Rumaila oil field.

Iraq massed tens of thousands of troops along the Kuwaiti border in the summer of 1990, signaling a possible invasion. Despite this military buildup, the international community initially did not believe that Iraq would take the drastic step of invading Kuwait. Diplomatic efforts continued, but Hussein's demands were uncompromising. On August 2, 1990, Iraqi forces crossed the border, swiftly overwhelming the Kuwaiti military and occupying the country within a matter of hours.



The international response was immediate and overwhelmingly negative. The **United Nations**, under **Resolution 660**, condemned Iraq's invasion and demanded its immediate withdrawal. However, Saddam Hussein refused to back down, annexing Kuwait as Iraq's 19th province and setting the stage for a broader conflict that would soon involve a U.S.-led coalition of international forces.

## **Invasion of Kuwait**

On **August 2, 1990**, Iraq, under the leadership of **Saddam Hussein**, launched a sudden and swift invasion of **Kuwait**, a small, oil-rich neighbor to the south. The invasion marked the beginning of the Gulf War, a conflict that would draw international condemnation and lead to one of the largest military coalitions in modern history. This article delves into the key events surrounding Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, exploring the motivations behind the attack, the military tactics employed, and the immediate consequences for both countries and the world.

### **Saddam Hussein's Motivations for Invasion**

Iraq's decision to invade Kuwait was driven by a mix of economic, territorial, and political motivations. Following the end of the **Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988)**, Iraq was left with a devastated economy and crippling debts, amounting to over \$80 billion. Much of this debt was owed to Gulf states, including Kuwait, which had financially supported Iraq during its war with Iran. Saddam Hussein expected these debts to be forgiven as a gesture of gratitude, but Kuwait, along with Saudi Arabia, refused.

Additionally, Iraq accused Kuwait of deliberately lowering global oil prices by exceeding its **OPEC production quotas**, which further damaged Iraq's struggling economy. Kuwait's overproduction kept oil prices low at a time when Iraq was desperate for increased oil revenues to fund its post-war recovery. Furthermore, Iraq claimed that Kuwait was siphoning oil from the **Rumaila oil field**, which straddled the Iraq-Kuwait border. Saddam Hussein used these economic grievances to justify his aggressive stance toward Kuwait.

Beyond the economic issues, Saddam Hussein harbored long-standing territorial claims over Kuwait, asserting that it was historically part of Iraq, a claim that dates back to the colonial divisions created after World War I. Seizing Kuwait not only promised to alleviate Iraq's financial crisis but also gave Hussein control over one of the world's most valuable oil reserves, boosting Iraq's influence in the region and potentially elevating it as a dominant power in the Persian Gulf.

### **The Invasion: Military Strategy and Execution**

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was meticulously planned and executed with overwhelming force. At around **2:00 a.m. on August 2, 1990**, Iraqi forces, consisting of over **100,000 troops** and **300**

**tanks**, crossed the border into Kuwait. The Iraqi military, considered one of the most formidable in the Middle East after years of fighting Iran, faced little resistance from the much smaller Kuwaiti army, which had only **16,000 active soldiers**.

Iraq employed a multi-pronged attack. Ground troops, backed by tanks and artillery, quickly overwhelmed Kuwaiti defenses, while Iraqi **special forces** were airlifted into Kuwait City to seize key installations, including the royal palace, government buildings, and communication centers. Within a matter of hours, Iraqi forces had captured most of the capital and neutralized Kuwait's military infrastructure.

By **August 3**, just a day after the invasion began, Iraqi forces had complete control over Kuwait. The speed and efficiency of the invasion left the international community stunned. The **Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah**, and key members of the royal family fled to Saudi Arabia, effectively leaving the country under Iraqi occupation.

### **Iraq's Occupation of Kuwait**

Following the successful invasion, Iraq quickly moved to consolidate its control over Kuwait. Saddam Hussein declared that Kuwait had been annexed as Iraq's **19th province**, renaming it **Al-Sabahiyah** after the ruling Al-Sabah family. The Iraqi regime installed a puppet government and imposed martial law, while the Iraqi military secured key oil fields and looted the wealth of Kuwait.

During the occupation, Iraqis systematically looted the Kuwaiti central bank, national museums, and private properties. Iraq's forces were accused of widespread **human rights abuses**, including executions, arbitrary arrests, and torture. Tens of thousands of Kuwaitis were displaced, with many fleeing to neighboring countries, creating a refugee crisis.

Saddam Hussein justified the occupation by framing it as a "correction" of colonial borders and an effort to redistribute the wealth of Kuwait to the broader Arab world. However, the international community, particularly Arab states, saw the invasion as a blatant act of aggression. Even nations like Jordan and Yemen, which had previously supported Iraq, expressed concern over the invasion.

## **Prelude to War**

### **International Reaction and Sanctions**

The global reaction to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was characterized by a rapid and coordinated response from the international community. The United Nations Security Council, leveraging its authority, passed Resolution 661 on August 6, 1990, which imposed a comprehensive trade embargo on Iraq. This resolution sought to isolate Iraq from the international financial system

and cut off its primary source of revenue—oil exports. The sanctions were designed to create significant economic pressure on the Iraqi government, with the goal of forcing a withdrawal from Kuwait without resorting to military action. The sanctions were further supported by an international coalition that included not only Western powers but also key regional actors, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The coalition's strategy involved both diplomatic and military measures. The UN also established the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) to oversee the disarmament of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and to ensure compliance with the resolution's terms.

### **Coalition Formation and Military Build-Up**

The formation of a broad coalition of nations was a critical element in the prelude to the Gulf War. The United States, as the leading member of the coalition, worked to assemble a diverse group of countries, including major Western powers such as the United Kingdom, France, and Canada, as well as regional partners like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria. This coalition was not only a political alliance but also a military one, with extensive logistical and operational planning undertaken to prepare for potential conflict. Operation Desert Shield, the defensive phase, began with the deployment of a substantial number of troops, aircraft, and naval assets to the Persian Gulf region. The U.S. deployed over 500,000 troops, with additional contributions from coalition partners bringing the total to around 700,000. The buildup included the establishment of military bases, airfields, and supply lines, along with the pre-positioning of equipment and resources to support a large-scale operation. This strategic deployment aimed to create a formidable military presence in the region, both as a deterrent to further Iraqi aggression and as a preparation for a possible offensive operation to liberate Kuwait.

### **Diplomatic Efforts**

Throughout the buildup, intense diplomatic efforts were made to resolve the crisis without resorting to full-scale military action. The United States and its allies engaged in a series of negotiations with Iraq, exploring various diplomatic avenues to address Iraq's grievances and avoid war. These efforts included proposals for economic aid, security guarantees, and discussions about Iraq's regional concerns. Despite these diplomatic initiatives, Iraq remained unyielding, with Saddam Hussein rejecting the UN resolutions and refusing to set a timeline for withdrawal from Kuwait. The failure to achieve a diplomatic resolution led to the coalition's decision to commence military operations. The diplomatic process underscored the challenges of balancing diplomatic efforts with the need to enforce international law and protect regional stability. The inability to reach a negotiated settlement highlighted the complexities of international diplomacy in the face of aggressive and uncompromising regimes.

# **Operation Desert Storm**

## **Air Campaign**

Operation Desert Storm began on January 17, 1991, marking the commencement of combat operations. The air campaign was designed to achieve several objectives: to establish air superiority, to cripple Iraq's military infrastructure, and to prepare the battlefield for the subsequent ground offensive. The coalition employed a sophisticated and technologically advanced approach, utilizing precision-guided munitions, stealth aircraft, and electronic warfare systems. The air offensive targeted key elements of Iraq's military capabilities, including air defenses, radar installations, command and control centers, and logistical hubs. The use of precision-guided munitions allowed for high accuracy in striking strategic targets while minimizing collateral damage. The air campaign was also intended to undermine the morale of Iraqi forces and disrupt their ability to mount an effective defense. The intensity of the bombing campaign was evident in the extensive damage inflicted on Iraqi military installations and infrastructure. The air campaign effectively neutralized much of Iraq's military capability and set the stage for a successful ground offensive by severely weakening the Iraqi defensive posture.

## **Ground Campaign**

The ground offensive, initiated on February 24, 1991, was executed with remarkable speed and effectiveness. Known as the "100-Hour War," the operation involved a coordinated assault by coalition ground forces that quickly achieved its objectives. The ground campaign featured a combination of armored units, mechanized infantry, and close air support, which enabled rapid maneuvers and decisive actions. The coalition's strategy included deep penetration and flanking movements designed to outmaneuver and encircle Iraqi forces. Key operations included a swift advance into Kuwait City and the encirclement of Iraqi units in southern Iraq. The effectiveness of the ground campaign was largely attributed to the extensive damage inflicted during the air campaign, which had significantly weakened Iraqi defenses and disrupted their operational capabilities. The coalition forces, utilizing superior tactics and technology, achieved their objectives in a short timeframe, leading to the liberation of Kuwait and the successful conclusion of the major combat operations. By February 28, 1991, the coalition had achieved its primary objectives, resulting in the declaration of a ceasefire and the formal end of hostilities.

## **Aftermath**

### **Immediate Consequences**

The immediate aftermath of the Gulf War was marked by the successful liberation of Kuwait and the withdrawal of Iraqi forces. The ceasefire agreement, declared on February 28, 1991, formalized the end of the conflict and outlined the terms for Iraq's compliance with UN

resolutions. These terms included the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait, the return of Kuwaiti sovereignty, and the establishment of conditions for monitoring and enforcing compliance. The ceasefire also led to the establishment of no-fly zones over northern and southern Iraq, designed to protect Kurdish and Shiite populations from potential Iraqi retaliation. The enforcement of these no-fly zones involved ongoing air patrols and military operations to prevent Iraqi aircraft from violating the zones. The immediate post-war period saw efforts to address the humanitarian needs of the region, including the rebuilding of infrastructure in Kuwait and the provision of humanitarian aid to affected populations.

### **Humanitarian Impact**

The humanitarian impact of the Gulf War was profound, particularly in Iraq. The extensive economic sanctions imposed by the UN, combined with the damage caused by the conflict, led to severe shortages of essential goods, medical supplies, and infrastructure. The humanitarian crisis was exacerbated by the continued restrictions and the inability of Iraq to fully recover and rebuild. The war's impact on civilian life included increased mortality rates, deteriorating health conditions, and widespread suffering. The destruction of infrastructure, including water and sanitation facilities, contributed to a significant public health crisis. The environmental damage caused by the burning of oil wells and oil spills further compounded the humanitarian challenges faced by the Iraqi population. The suffering of civilians highlighted the need for a careful consideration of the humanitarian implications of international interventions and economic sanctions.

### **Political and Regional Repercussions**

The political and regional repercussions of the Gulf War were significant and far-reaching. Saddam Hussein's continued rule in Iraq contributed to ongoing regional instability and tensions. The war also had a profound impact on U.S. foreign policy and its approach to the Middle East. The conflict underscored the complexities of enforcing international resolutions and addressing aggressive regimes. In the aftermath of the war, Iraq faced continued economic hardships and political isolation, with ongoing sanctions and international scrutiny. The war's impact extended beyond Iraq, influencing regional dynamics and international relations. The conflict also set the stage for future developments in the Middle East, including the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the broader War on Terror. The Gulf War's legacy in terms of regional instability and international policy continued to shape the geopolitical landscape in the years that followed.



## 4. Timeline

**August 2, 1990:** Iraq invades Kuwait, claiming it as a province.

**August 3, 1990:** The United Nations Security Council condemns the invasion and begins imposing economic sanctions on Iraq.

**August 7, 1990:** The U.S. begins deploying troops to Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield to protect the region from further Iraqi aggression.

**August 8, 1990:** Iraq announces the annexation of Kuwait, declaring it a new province of Iraq.

**August 9, 1990:** The UN imposes a comprehensive trade embargo on Iraq.

**August 12, 1990:** The UN Security Council approves Resolution 665, which authorizes member states to intercept Iraqi ships to enforce the embargo.

**August 16, 1990:** Iraq declares its intention to ignore the UN resolutions and continues its occupation of Kuwait.

**September 1, 1990:** The UN Security Council approves Resolution 661, calling for the cessation of trade with Iraq and further tightening of sanctions.

**November 29, 1990:** The UN Security Council passes Resolution 678, authorizing the use of force if Iraq does not withdraw from Kuwait by January 15, 1991.

**January 15, 1991:** The deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait passes without compliance.

**January 16, 1991:** The coalition forces, led by the U.S., begin Operation Desert Storm with a massive air campaign against Iraq.

**January 17, 1991:** The air campaign begins with intensive bombing of military and strategic targets in Iraq and Kuwait.

**February 24, 1991:** Coalition ground forces launch Operation Desert Sabre, beginning the ground assault to liberate Kuwait.

**February 27, 1991:** The coalition forces achieve a decisive victory, and President George H. W. Bush announces the cessation of hostilities.

**February 28, 1991:** The official end of the Gulf War is declared, with Kuwait liberated from Iraqi occupation.



**March 3, 1991:** The UN Security Council passes Resolution 686, calling for the return of prisoners of war and addressing other post-war issues.

**April 6, 1991:** The UN Security Council passes Resolution 687, setting out the terms for the ceasefire and requiring Iraq to dismantle its weapons of mass destruction.

**May 1, 1991:** The coalition forces complete their withdrawal from the Gulf region.

**July 1, 1991:** Iraq officially accepts the UN terms for the ceasefire and agrees to comply with the resolutions regarding weapons of mass destruction and other conditions.

**December 15, 1991:** The UN's Special Commission begins its work in Iraq to ensure compliance with disarmament requirements.

**December 31, 1991:** The Soviet Union formally dissolves, impacting the geopolitical landscape and future relations with Iraq.

## 5. Major Parties Involved

### United States

The United States played a pivotal role in responding to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Initially focused on diplomatic and economic measures, the U.S. led the coalition to enforce UN sanctions and deployed troops to Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield. As the deadline for Iraq's withdrawal approached without compliance, the U.S. led Operation Desert Storm, which included a significant air campaign followed by a successful ground assault. The U.S. aimed to liberate Kuwait and restore regional stability, achieving a decisive victory and influencing post-war policy.

### United Kingdom

The United Kingdom was a key ally in the Gulf War. The UK supported UN sanctions and the resolution authorizing force against Iraq. British forces participated actively in the military operations, contributing air and ground support. The UK's involvement underscored its commitment to international law, the security of its allies, and its strategic partnership with the United States.

## **France**

France was an essential member of the coalition, endorsing the UN resolutions and contributing to military operations. France provided significant air and ground forces, and its support was crucial in the coalition's success. The French government emphasized its commitment to international law and regional security, balancing its support with diplomatic efforts to ensure a comprehensive coalition strategy.

## **Saudi Arabia**

Saudi Arabia was directly affected by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and played a critical role in the coalition's strategy. The Saudi government allowed the deployment of coalition forces on its territory, which was vital for the execution of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Saudi Arabia also contributed financially to the war effort and supported humanitarian operations, demonstrating its commitment to regional security and stability.

## **Iraq**

Iraq, led by Saddam Hussein, sought to expand its regional influence by invading Kuwait. Despite international condemnation and UN sanctions, Iraq initially refused to comply with UN resolutions demanding withdrawal. The military response from the coalition forced Iraq to accept the ceasefire terms, although the regime's refusal to comply with all UN demands continued to affect Iraq's international relations post-war.

## **United Nations**

Under Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the United Nations played a central role in the diplomatic and sanctioning efforts against Iraq. The UN Security Council passed several resolutions condemning the invasion, imposing sanctions, and ultimately authorizing the use of force. The UN also managed post-war resolutions, including overseeing Iraq's disarmament and the return of prisoners of war, ensuring compliance with the ceasefire terms.

## **European Union (European Council)**

The European Union, through the European Council, supported the UN sanctions and military actions. EU member states contributed to the coalition's military efforts and engaged in humanitarian support for the affected populations. The EU's stance emphasized the importance of upholding international law and supporting collective security measures, reflecting its commitment to regional stability and global cooperation.

## **Arab League**

The Arab League, initially divided, eventually supported the UN sanctions and endorsed the coalition's military actions to restore Kuwaiti sovereignty. The League's support was crucial in maintaining regional solidarity and legitimacy for the coalition's efforts, reflecting a unified Arab stance on the need to address Iraq's aggression.

## **Russia**

Russia, then part of the Soviet Union and led by President Mikhail Gorbachev, supported the UN resolutions and sanctions imposed on Iraq. Following the end of the Cold War, Russia's position was aligned with the broader international community in endorsing the use of force if necessary. Russia's support was key in providing international legitimacy to the coalition's actions.

## **China**

China supported the UN resolutions and sanctions against Iraq, reflecting its commitment to international law and security. China's position aligned with the broader international consensus, although it was cautious in its support of military action. China's involvement in the diplomatic process underscored its role in global governance and its alignment with UN-led initiatives.

## **Japan**

Japan supported the UN sanctions and contributed financially to the coalition's efforts. Due to its pacifist constitution, Japan did not participate directly in military operations but provided significant economic assistance to support the coalition and humanitarian efforts. Japan's stance highlighted its commitment to international security and its role in supporting UN-led initiatives.

## **Germany**

Germany supported the coalition's actions and contributed financially to the war effort, aligning with the UN resolutions and sanctions. Germany's involvement was significant in providing economic support and demonstrating solidarity with the coalition's objectives, reflecting its commitment to maintaining international order and security.