

Dear Delegates of Middle East Summit,

My name is Ben Zuckier, and it is my honor to serve as your chair and welcome you to the Middle East Summit of YUNMUN XXXI!

Before I get started, here is some background information about me: I grew up in Teaneck, New Jersey and attended MTA for high school. I then spent a year learning at the Gush in Israel before coming to Yeshiva College. I am currently (technically) a senior, majoring in some combination of Mathematics and Computer Science, in my third of four years. This will be my fourth YUNMUN conference; I served as a delegate for my last two years of high school, in DISEC and UNODC. Last year, I was fortunate to assume the role of Assistant Chair of MES and now it is a true privilege for me to serve as your Chair of MES for this year's conference.

The Middle East Summit, though not technically a committee in the United Nations, has consistently earned the reputation of being one of the most prestigious and serious committees in this conference. This is largely due to the constant activity and intense conflict in the region, a geographical area filled with economically and politically powerful countries. I am looking forward to seeing this committee follow this tradition and discuss our topic in a serious and focused manner, in order to have meaningful discussion and form articulate solutions to the pressing matter at hand.

Given the high-level mission and collaborative capacity of our committee, we will accordingly define our functions and powers in terms of those of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). These will enable our committee "to formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments... determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken... call on Members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggression... [and] take military action against an aggressor." Please see this concise webpage<sup>1</sup> to review the limited UNSC functions and powers that MES is adopting for YUNMUN XXXI and note that we are not adopting any further procedures unique to the UNSC, nor its characteristic veto powers.

Strong research and preparation will, of course, be essential to your dynamic contributions to our discourse. Our topics are complex and necessitate a developed familiarity with your country's foreign policies, international relationships and topic-related actions. You should start, therefore, by thoroughly researching the social, economic and political histories of your countries, as well as UN General Assembly resolutions, UNSC resolutions and the evolving condition of our topic.

Please note that subcommittees and sanctions will be insufficient towards resolving our topic on their own, especially given the other substantial powers wielded by our committee. I advise you

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/sc/about/functions.shtml>

to contemplate practical and creative solutions in advance of the conference. Especially given the two-thirds majority required to pass a resolution, you should bear in mind that conflicting resolutions will not be allowed to pass.

This year we will be focused on the applicability of Sharia, Islamic law, to modern-day countries in the Middle East. Your topic paper is a material means by which you can express and clarify your country's position with respect to our committee's topic, but please refrain from providing an overview of said topic in your position paper. Limit your treatment of the topic to your country's position by citing your country's outlook, actions, and geopolitical stance. Our committee staff will be aware of your country's policies and viewpoints, and will only tolerate their accurate representation. It is sometimes the case that a position which is logical to you is not the one held by the country you are setting out to represent; your goal is to do justice, as best you can, to your country's policy even – nay, especially – when it is at odds with your personal outlook. This is what sets apart the excellent from the good. I trust that your papers will uphold academic integrity, but just as a heads-up, all papers will be screened through Turnitin as routine conference procedure.

Whether this is your first or fourth YUNMUN conference, you should review the YUNMUN webpage, and particularly the Procedure Guide in the Delegate Handbook by which we will firmly abide. I hope that no matter your degree of experience, you will feel empowered to meaningfully engage in our discussions and ultimately find the conference deeply rewarding. I expect that together we can cultivate a committee environment that balances vibrant debate with genuine kindness, support and respect — for delegates, staff and all nationalities represented. Lasting friendships and connections can be born on YUNMUN, from heated negotiations to the most humdrum of working papers.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at [bzuckier@mail.yu.edu](mailto:bzuckier@mail.yu.edu) if you have any questions, thoughts, comments, or concerns regarding the conference and otherwise! I am really looking forward to a fun and constructive conference together.

Ben Zuckier  
Chair, Middle East Summit  
YUNMUN XXXI