

Esteemed Delegates,

It is my absolute pleasure to formally welcome you to YUNMUN XXXI! My name is Josh Weinstein, and I am super excited to serve as your chair of the SPECPOL committee for this year's conference. As this is my second year serving on this committee, let me assure you that we have a lot to unpack.

A little bit about me: I am a Junior at Yeshiva College studying Political Science with a minor in Business & Management. I grew up in West Hempstead, New York and attended HANC for high school, graduating in 2018. I then spent a year learning in Yeshivat Hakotel in the Old City of Jerusalem. World affairs is something I plan to delve into as a future lawyer with plans to study international and comparative politics.

Our conference this year will be one like no other; we are all learning about how to adapt and excel in this new environment of Covid-19, yet I am confident that the debates, solutions, and discourse that you will all offer will ensure a successful, meaningful, and educational experience for all of us. Please know that regardless of the situation we are in, the world, the Jewish people, and your family & friends need you to tackle world issues by working collaboratively to develop meaningful solutions; this stage is the best place to learn from one another, gain critical skills, and articulate your plans to bring prosperity to the world at large. I am confident that you will surpass my highest expectations.

SPECPOL, the Special Politics and Decolonization Committee, was first established with a mandate limited to matters of decolonization, but after vast improvement globally in that effort, it merged with the Special Political Committee, which was created to deal with specific political issues.¹ Today, SPECPOL addresses a range of distinct issues which include five decolonization-related agenda items, the effects of atomic radiation, questions relating to information, a comprehensive view of the question of peacekeeping operations as well as a review of special political missions, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East, the Report of the Special Committee on Israeli Practices, and international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.²

Our topic for this year's conference will deal with SPECPOL's responsibility towards peacekeeping, and particularly the UN mission in Kashmir that involves both India and Pakistan. This controversy has a rich history that I urge you all to delve into as we examine the nature of peacekeeping and its role in twenty-first century international relations. I urge you to begin your research for the conference with the rich history of SPECPOL, specifically its historic success in the realm of peacekeeping. The history of SPECPOL and its efforts will inform and direct your

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_General_Assembly_Fourth_Committee

² <https://www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/>

research in our upcoming debates. As you prepare for this year's conference, please keep in mind that you are representing your country's views and not your own. Please come well researched and prepared to seriously debate the issues at hand. Be sure to include citations, and keep in mind that all papers will be submitted through Turnitin, so be aware of plagiarism.

If you have any questions, concerns, or even just want to say hi, please feel free to reach out to me at jweinstl@mail.yu.edu. I am humbled and excited to hear from all of you and begin reading your position papers. I am confident that you will exceed my expectations; my bar is set very high--set it even higher.

Best of luck,

Josh Weinstein
Chair, SPECPOL
YUNMUN XXXI