



Study Guide

Security Council

Gimnazija Bežigrad Model United Nations



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UN SECURITY COUNCIL – STUDY GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction of the Chair

Hey everyone! I'm Taj Kai Golob and I'll be your Security Council chair as well as the president of the General Assembly at GimBMUN. I was born in Ljubljana, Slovenia and have lived here my entire life. I'm currently a fourth-year student at Gimnazija Bežigrad. Some of my interests include all types of sport and music. I've been involved in MUN since my second year at Gimnazija Bežigrad. I've attended several international MUN conferences in these last few years and have even won the award of best delegate at KranjMUN in January 2022. After this year I am planning to move to Calgary, Canada where I will study business at the Haskayne School of Business. I'm really excited to be chairing this committee and am looking forward to a good debate and an overall fun time. Lastly I'll leave you with a quote, that you should live by, from one of the best athletes of all time Wayne Gretzky: "You miss all the shots that you don't take."

Introduction of the topic

Natural resources cannot be found everywhere around the globe; however, they have become a vital part of everyday life around the world. Of course, many natural resources, such as water and minerals, are required to sustain life, but in the modern world we have found many other functions that natural resources can complete. The most prevalent one in the global socioeconomic and political scheme is their function to provide energy for machines.

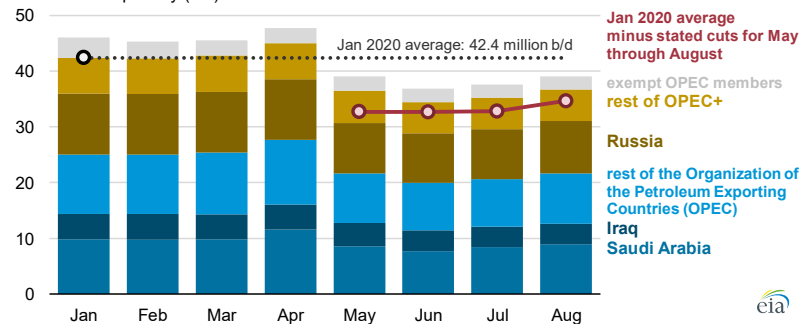
Resources such as water and sunlight can be used to provide energy, however, fossil fuels and nuclear energy are still the two most prominent sources of energy on the global scale. Oil and natural are currently the most used of the many existing fossil fuels. These resources cannot

be found everywhere on the planet; therefore a select

few countries control a large share of the global oil and natural gas supply. The top 5 countries in oil reserves are Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Iran and Iraq. Four of these countries are part of the Organization

of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). OPEC currently has 14 member states which hold more than 80% of the world's oil reserves, giving them a global monopoly on oil. The top 5 countries in natural gas reserves are Russia, Iran, Qatar, United States of America, and Saudi Arabia. These countries are currently in possession of more than 60% of the entire planet's natural gas reserves, with Russia, Iran and Qatar by themselves holding more than 50%. These monopolies provide countries with large reserves with an unimaginable control of the market for fossil fuels.

OPEC+ monthly crude oil production (Jan–Aug 2020)
million barrels per day (b/d)



History of the topic

The issue of a practical monopoly on energy has only been prevalent for less than 150 years. As oil and natural gas were becoming more important sources of energy, the geopolitical situation of the world looked very different. Most of the planet's strategically important land was under European imperial control. This means that almost the entire supply of oil and



natural gas was under European control or had not been discovered yet. After the world went through a long phase of decolonization, during the second half of the 19th century, most of the oil and natural gas reserves were in possession of completely new countries. These countries created OPEC, which (in very oversimplified terms) is one of the largest cartel agreements of all time. OPEC member states have a tight grasp on global oil supply. Due to this these countries can also control the rise and fall of petroleum prices. Another important organization connected to energy supply is the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC). The first instance when this group of countries showed the amount of control over the oil market they have is the 1973 oil crisis. In October of 1973 OAPEC announced an oil embargo against the countries who supported Israel in the Yom Kippur war, these countries being the USA, Canada, the UK, Japan, the Netherlands, Rhodesia, South Africa, and Portugal. The embargo caused the price of oil to skyrocket nearly 300% by the end of the embargo. This caused the world to go into a recession.

The same countries which controlled the oil market back then are still in control. But with the world plunged into troubled times with the invasion of Ukraine and OPEC's cut back on production we must prevent what happened in the 1970s to happen again now and in the future.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Energy producing is very important in the world as we know it. Providing our homes with electricity and heat is of our primal concern and the latter come from energy suppliers around the world. The largest countries by oil production in the world are United States of America, Russia, Saudi Arabia. United States and Russia also take the first and second place in yearly natural gas production, but when it comes to electricity production and consumption, China is the leading nation. These countries hold a vast influence over other nations that cannot produce as much energy because of their environmental factors.

The problem arises, when it comes to international crisis, of which we have heard a lot in the last few months and years. Because many countries are dependent on larger and higher energy producing countries, an obstacle such as pandemic or a war can shake the ties between countries a lot and so, the smaller less self-sufficient countries struggle in energy production. What most nations have gone through lately was a significant increase in wholesale energy prices. Many causes add to that, first being the emerge of countries from the Covid-19 pandemic in late 2021, which was mainly driven by the recovery in energy supply and demand. It mostly affected European market and the increase in energy prices was significant. The aggravation of the problem caused the Russian invasion of Ukraine in late February 2022. Since then, many sanctions have been opposed against Russia and that greatly affected the whole energy market. The invasion mostly affected electricity prices (12% rise from last year) and natural gas prices (20% rise from previous trading season). Both hit the record levels in prices and that implies the power that Russia had over other nations regarding the energy resources.

Climate change is and has been a big concern for the last few decades and the only way to solve it is to end our reliance on coal, oil, natural gas. From 30 November to 12 December 2015 all 193 UN member states participated in the UN Climate Change Conference and later signed the Paris Agreement. In short sense, the agreement includes commitments from all countries to reduce their emissions and work together to adapt to the impacts of climate change and calls on countries to strengthen their commitments over time. It boosted the renewable energy production, such as solar and wind power plants. In terms of renewable energy production, China precedes all other countries by far, which gives it the self-sufficiency regarding the electricity. But there still are countries that are hooked on other's resources and that gives the other nations more power over them. Germany, for example is a fully dependant country on Russian natural gas and because Netherlands's largest natural gas reserve will close in 2024 and since Germany does not have any LNG (liquid natural gas) terminals yet, its supplies are very limited. Germany is still the only country in European Union that did not block natural gas transport lines from Russia.



COUNTRY	CURRENT SITUATION / MEASURES TAKEN
Russian Federation	Currently has the largest reserve of natural gas and one of the largest reserves of oil on the planet. The war in Ukraine has harmed its relations with Europe to the point where Russia is refusing to provide gas to some countries. Most European countries have embargoed Russian goods altogether.
United States of America	One of the few NATO countries with substantial natural gas and oil reserves. The infrastructure required to process raw oil into its finished products is also present. It has led the charge against Russian goods; however, its motives can be questioned as a fall in Russian fossil fuel sales equates to a rise in American ones.
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Currently the UK is one of the countries generating the largest share of their power through renewable sources. Only 4% of gas and 9% of oil in the UK were acquired from Russia, which means that they are non-reliant on Russia for energy.
French Republic	Most of France's energy comes from its 56 operable nuclear reactors, therefore it is not hugely reliant on oil, natural gas, and coal, however, a large share of the uranium required to power these nuclear powerplants comes from Russia.
People's Republic of China	China is one of the few countries whose relations with Russia have stayed relatively the same since the breakout of the war in Ukraine. In fact, its trading relations with Russia have even greatly improved. Since March of 2022 China has increased its oil imports from Russia tenfold.
German Federation	Germany has been the country who truly drew the short end of the stick in the last year or so. Russia accounted for 55% of Germany's gas imports. Germany is also one of the largest importers of coal in Europe. Over half of its coal imports in 2021 came from Russia. Recently Russia has refused to provide certain amounts of gas and oil to Germany. This has caused prices of gas to rise 17,7% in the first half of 2022, which has caused a domino effect on the German economy.
Dominion of Canada	Canada is one of the most resource rich countries in the world due to its sheer size. It possesses the 3rd largest oil reserves and 18 th largest natural gas reserves. The problem that Canada mainly faces regarding energy production is that it does not have the required infrastructure to process oil into its derivatives (such as petrol). This inhibits Canada from helping other western countries who are facing an oil and gas crisis. Canadian oil is also

	very hard to obtain as it requires work on oil sands which are extremely harmful for the environment.
The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia possesses the 2 nd most oil of any country in the world and the 5 th most natural gas in the world which equates to 4,2% percent of the global reserve of natural gas. The country is 2 nd in oil production globally as it has some of the most easily accessible oil on the planet. It is one of the founding members of OPEC. In the past OPEC has proven that it has a tight grasp on the oil market that should not be challenged.
Venezuela	Venezuela has the world's largest proven oil reserves. The country used to be one of the largest oil producers in the world, however their production has significantly decreased in the last decade. Currently they are 13 th in the world regarding oil production. The reason their oil production has been on a steep decline in the last decade are several political issues which have evolved into large scale crisis in the country. The consequences of this crisis have been hyperinflation and escalating rates of starvation, disease, and crime.
Norway	Norway has the largest proven oil and natural gas reserves in the European community. They are self-sufficient regarding oil and gas and can still export most of their product abroad. Many European countries are already heavily reliant on Norway for oil, the largest of them being the UK and the Netherlands. Because of the war in Ukraine many other countries are becoming more and more reliant on Norwegian oil. This puts Norway in a unique position. They can save or doom many European countries during the worsening oil crisis.

PAST ACTIONS OF THE UN, THE SECURITY COUNCIL, AND OTHER BODIES

The power that energy providing countries hold is a very pervasive problem in today's world, but it's a problem that sadly has not been tackled in a way that would help those who are most harmed by it quickly and efficiently. Despite this there have been some actions taken by the UN which will greatly help decrease the severity of this situation in the long term.

Firstly there is the Paris agreement. The Paris agreement was drafted on December 12th, 2015 in Le Bourget, France and signed on 22nd of April, 2016 in Paris. It currently has 195 signatories. The agreement covers climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance. The goal of the Paris agreement in the long term is to keep the rise in mean global temperature below 2°C. Emissions are to be reduced as well, as the world is supposed to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. This agreement can help limit the power of energy providing countries due to the fact that if countries begin to swerve towards green energy, they will no longer require fossil fuels in order to operate, therefore hindering many countries' power. The Paris agreement has been praised to its relatively high goals, but it has also been criticized by many environmentalists due to the fact that some people believe it is not binding enough. This has proven to be true as some signatories have gone on to ignore the goals set by the agreement.

The second action that can help reduce energy providers power is the recent wave of sanctions and embargoes against Russia. Due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine many countries have decided to cut off all diplomatic and economic ties to Russia. This means that they have quit importing and exporting goods to Russia. Russia's largest export to Europe is natural gas. These actions have mostly closed off one of Russia's largest markets. Many experts simply thought that Russia would simply crumble under economic pressure, however Russia simply increased their activity in other markets such as China or India. In the end while the idea of the embargo was good, it simply wasn't supported by enough countries to have a long lasting effect. An action that was supposed to harm Russia extended its reach to brand new markets and hindered many European countries, which heavily relied on Russian oil and gas.

ISSUES TO ADDRESS

The impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on worldwide energy supply

Russia is one of the most resource rich countries in the world. These resources include natural, which Russia currently possesses the most in the world, and oil. Ever since the end of the cold war at the end of the 20th century, Europe has been steadily becoming more and more reliant on Russian natural gas. Currently 45% of European natural is supplied via Russian pipelines. Ever since the start of the war in Ukraine, Europe has been adamant on sanctioning Russia for its wrongdoing. The only problem with this is that while Europe stays highly dependent on Russian natural gas, it cannot truly say it has cut off Russia. To add onto this in recent months Russia has lowered the amount of natural gas they are willing to provide to European countries. This has raised the overall price of gas severely and will severely harm many European citizens in the coming winter months when they usually rely on gas to heat their homes and power all their electric devices. This inability to rely on Russia has caused many European countries, such as Denmark and Norway, to finance major green energy projects to provide an alternative to expensive Russian fossil fuels. However, these measures cannot be implemented by poorer European countries because they are simply too expensive.

OPEC's control of the oil market

As stated before the countries which make up OPEC hold more than 80% of the world's oil reserves which gives them overarching control over the oil market. As the world has seen in the 1970s, OPEC can bring the world to its knees just by making a few simple decisions. The questions that arises is how to limit OPEC's control over the global economy. Of course, the first solution that pops into many people's heads is to simply limit our reliance on fossil fuels. However, this would be a process that takes a large amount of time. An amount the people who are suffering from the rising cost of oil and gas simply do not have. The sad reality of the situation is that OPEC currently has the global community in a headlock that is seemingly inescapable.

FURTHER READING

Sustainable energy for all (SE4ALL) is a specific initiative launched in September 2011, in recognition of the importance of access to sustainable energy for economic development for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It has been created to eradicate energy poverty and avert dangerous climate changes due to excessive use of fossil fuels. The SE4ALL argues that permanent sovereignty over natural resources and energy security policy are false barriers to action. The link below leads to a journal that explains the facilitation of sustainable energy in the international law perspective:

https://law.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1687439/02Bruce1.pdf

The war in Ukraine has been a major factor as it was the main cause for the energy crisis in the last year. It is known that energy prices have increased significantly, and the latter mostly affected poor and less developed countries since the cost of living have risen so high. More about the global impact of war in Ukraine regarding the energy should be available in the summary below:

https://news.un.org/pages/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/GCRG_3rd-Brief_Aug3_2022_FINAL.pdf?utm_source=UNITED+NATIONS&utm_medium=BRIEF&utm_campaign=GCRG

And lastly the Paris agreement is a document I highly recommend you read. Many of the goals during this conference might coincide with the ones set out in the Paris agreement. Just so we do not come across too many repeating clauses you should all know what most of its clauses aimed to accomplish.

https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

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