

Composition and Structure of Session: Middle East

Each country comprises the following officials, the head of state and the foreign minister. The following countries, delegations, organizations, and press are represented:

1. “Quartet”: United States of America, European Union, United Nations, and the Russian Federation
2. Third party negotiators: United Kingdom, France, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Turkey
3. Conflicting parties: Israel, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon
4. Countries with hard-lined views against Israel: Iran, Libya
5. Press: Reuters (Europe), Ha’aretz (Israeli Labor Party), Al-Jazeera (Arab), Associated Press (Global/American), CNN (American), Al-Quds (Israeli Arabs), Jerusalem Times (Israeli Likud Party), Hasbara (Israeli Government Advocacy group), Agencie France, al-Hayat (Lebanon), and Xinhua (China)
6. Scientific Experts: OPCW and IAEA

Countries, press agencies, and scientific experts may be added or removed depending on the direction of current events. Even though countries such as Libya and Iran never enter direct negotiations with Israel at such high administrative levels because they do not recognize Israel’s right to exist, they are made part of the committee to provide a hard-line stance towards Israel, which is balanced with third party countries who have more moderate viewpoints towards Israel such as Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey. The idea is to bring differing viewpoints that give an accurate survey of the complexities faced in addressing the regional conflict.

There are two committees: a Council of Heads of State and a Council of Foreign Ministers. The chair of each council will be a member of the Quartet (United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), the Russian Federation, and the United States of America (US)). The chairing member of the Quartet is decided either on a rotating basis or from current events. For example, the Iraqi reconstruction is currently a very significant topic in regional current events, and the United States is heavily spearheading this initiative. If the United States is the chair of the conference, the President of the United States chairs the Heads of State Council, and the Secretary of State chairs the Foreign Ministers Council. There may be a liaison for the chairs that goes between both sides to make sure the country’s policies are accurate and consistent in both committees, talk to press as directed by the Foreign Minister or the Head of State, and provide information desired by the Foreign Minister or the Head of State.

The issues are based on current events. For example, if current events indicate that the United States should chair this council, the agenda discussed has importance to American foreign policy. For this very reason, having Quartet member chairs that change on an annual basis will shed light on how the desires of a third party affect regional dynamics. For example, the European Union, due to its former imperialistic ties in the Middle East, may desire to focus on the progressive removal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and

economic cooperation in the Middle East; while the Russian Federation may focus more on infiltration of terrorist cells that have aggravated many of the country's problems with Chechnya. Again, the issues that carry importance amongst the different Quartet members change as current events change.

In order to select delegations for each country, each interested participant is asked to respond to a series of questions and give their honest opinions to those questions. This is the registration form provided in the website, www.pitt.edu/~dea5/SessionMiddleEast.html. This application ensures the forum is supplied with serious delegates who display a good knowledge of the regional conflict or who show enough motivation to do concentrated research in areas and issues they do not entirely understand. These questions are designed based on current events in the region and help gauge the bias of the delegate. Each delegate is given ample preparation time to understand the stance of the country they are called to represent as well as contact members of their delegation.

Scientific Experts

Students are asked to serve as scientific experts that provide recommendations on specific issues. These scientific experts are used to discuss issues with known scientific and analytical methods or approaches such as water distribution, economic cooperation, or environmental conservation. Depending on the issue discussed in the agenda, two experts provide their scientific analysis of the issue and propose solutions to the issue along with the reasoning for their conclusions. This will be done via a five-minute Power Point presentation. The committee will entertain their conclusions but do not have to adopt them. These experts are only designed to advise, not force, the committee to adopt their solutions.

Press

Various delegations serve as press in groups of two people, a reporter and a writer, at the discretion of the delegation representing the media agency. Each media agency is called to document events within the conference and provide a cumulative work for each day's proceedings and is allowed into any committee. This is done by interviewing diplomats on their opinions and stances regarding the proceedings that occur during the forum and reporting first-hand on the day's events. The presentation of such articles to the committees is made at the discretion of the chair, and delegates are expected to respond to these articles as necessary.