

WATERLOO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MODEL UNITED NATIONS



SECURITY COUNCIL

IRAN CRISIS

MAY 12-14, 2026

KEY ISSUES: For security council

On February 28, 2026, the United States and Israel jointly launched a large scale missile attack on Iran. As part of that strike, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei was killed, along with top military officials of the Iranian military. In response, Iran launched missile and drone strikes against U.S. military bases in Qatar and Bahrain. Israel has also launched secondary strikes against Hezbollah targets in Lebanon.

The United States has not declared this to be an action of war but has used the following reasons for justifying the attacks:

- disrupting Iranian nuclear weapon capability
- destroying Iranian support for terrorist activities
- pre-emptive actions against possible strikes by Iran,
- the need for regime change in the face of a despotic actions that led to the deaths and imprisonment of political opponents.

Key issues for debate:

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1. Did the US and Israel violate international law for the attacks launched on February 28, 2026?
2. Did the attacks by Iran on US military bases in Qatar and Lebanon constitute a violation of international law?
3. What role should the UN play in solving Iran crisis
4. Who gets to determine any succession in Iran (despite Donald Trump's claims that he should have a say).
5. What is the solution to the Iran war/

Historical timeline of events

In 1953 United States, through the CIA Great Britain through British intelligence conducted [Operation Ajax](#) . It's main purpose was to oust the reigning government of Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh and replace him with Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi who had previously ruled Iran with an an "iron fist", jailing and killing opponents of his prior regime. He was friendly however to the interests of both the United States and Great Britain.

In 1957, the United States helped launch Iran's nuclear program. They did so by providing a research reactor and fuel. And for the next 20 years, the Shah purchased American weaponry for Iranian defense.

In 1979, after years of repression, torture and execution by the Shah's regime, Iran experienced a revolution that culminated in the establishment of an Islamic Republic. With the ouster of the Shah, the Ayatollah Khomeini established a regime based on Islamic extremism. He declared the United States, the "Great Satan" and an enemy of the state. With the thrill of success, the Iranian government took steps to remove US influence from Iran and supported a "student" led hostage taking of 52 Americans, holding them for 444 days. The action led the United States to sever all ties with Iran.

In 2002, following the September 11, 2001 attacks against the United States by Afghan terrorists, President George W Bush, declared an “Axis of Evil” grouping Iran, Iraq and North Korea as propagators of terrorism, as it began an action to find “weapons of mass destruction”.

In 2007, as evidence of Iranian nuclear weapon capabilities began to be of concern to US and Israeli intelligence, a cyber attack, supposedly led jointly by the United States and Israel, destroyed Iranian nuclear centrifuges. US sanctions against Iran for its nuclear development program, led to the holding of \$50 billion of Iranian funds.

In 2015, President Barack Obama reached a deal with the Iranian government allowing for access to the \$50 billion dollars in return for Iranian promises to limit their nuclear developments. This deal was revoked by President Donald Trump in 2018 as he reinvoked strict sanctions and called for “maximum pressure” to be applied on Iran.

In 2020, a U.S. drone strike killed General Qassem Soleimani who was in Baghdad at that time. This resulted in Iranian missile strikes on U.S. bases in Iraq.

In 2025, the United States and Israel launched air strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities

From December 2025 to January 2026, massive anti-government protests rocked Iran as the country faced economic collapse. The United States began to actively support the demonstrators.

February, 2026, the United States and Israel began attacks on Iranian sites. Donald Trump cited supposed intelligence reports that Iran was accelerating their nuclear programs. No released US intelligence reports support Trump’s claims.

The United Nations is clear in its mandate that wars of aggression are illegal. In fact, the UN supports military action against another country in two circumstances only:

- a. The action was a defensive action against an aggressor country which has applied aggressive military force.
- b. The action is sanctioned by the United Nations.

Seeing as the United Nations has not sanctioned the attacks on Iran, the only legitimate argument for military intervention in Iran is that the US acted in a defensive manner. The argument that the Iran action is not a war is not supported by the US call for an unconditional surrender by Iran unless it can be proven that the US acted in a defensive response to Iranian aggression.

Key Issues for Discussion

1. What constitutes a legal military action?
2. What arguments can be made that Iran acted in an aggressive manner?
3. What arguments can be made that the US and/or Israel acted in an illegal manner according to international law?

4. What arguments can be made that Iran acted in an illegal manner according to international law?
5. What actions can the Security Council take against the US, Israel or Iran?
6. What is the best solution to the current crisis?
7. Should the veto vote interfere with any attempt to hold countries accountable?

Questions for your country:

1. What is your country's relation like with the US, Israel and or Iran?
2. How has your country been affected by the current crisis?
3. What effect does the current crisis have on the ability of the UN to effectively carry out its mandate?