



**LeedsMUN 2019**

**Study Guide**

**CRISIS**

**A Turkish Affair**



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*“War created bizarre allies, while peace itself could be divisive” – Ian Rankin*

## Introduction

It is July 2020, and NATO is in crisis. The symbol of its technological prowess over the rest of the world, the F35, has fallen into Russian hands, and its owner, Turkey’s descent into authoritarianism is testing the alliance’s very foundations. The balance of international power is at a tipping point, and resurgent Russia may be all that is needed to push things over the edge. This two cabinet crisis will require delegates to navigate the worlds of politics, espionage and perhaps even regional conflict as the fate of NATO is decided. Will it be able to keep itself together, or will Russia decide to bring the whole house of cards tumbling down? It is up to you, welcome to A Turkish Affair!



## Directors, Backroom and Chairs



**Director: James Gordon**

Hey, I am James a third-year psychology student at the University of Liverpool. I've got a passion for politics, jazz and history, and I'm fascinated by the chaotic (or stabilising) effects individuals have had on events through time. Quickly finding crisis to my liking, I have managed to involve myself in the committee in all but one conference I've attended, and I look forward helping delegates thrive in the rapidly evolving chaos this weekend shall hold! Weird flex: at 10 years old, I was told by current father of the house of commons (Kenneth Clarke MP) that I was "quite good" at the saxophone – I've been living the high ever since.

**Backroom: Christian Brookes**

Hi there, my name is Chris and I'll be your backroom at LeedsMUN 2019! I'm from the East Midlands but am currently studying in Sheffield, and am president of Sheffield Hallam Model UN society. I've been doing MUN for nearly three years, and my first love will always be Liverpool Football Club, although I also love the outdoors. Looking forward to seeing you at LeedsMUN!



**Backroom: Clémence Perno**

Clémence is a 21 years-old French student. She studies International Relations and Chinese at the University of Leeds. She started MUN in 2015, since her arrival at university and went to several conferences across France and Europe: Lyon, Paris, London, etc. She also was the Secretary General for Lyon MUN 2018, one of her best memories in her "MUN-career". In her free time, she enjoys watching Netflix, eating dumplings and taking long-walks with her dog.

**NATO Chair: Atharva Torne**

My name is Atharva, and I'm a first-year student at the University of Manchester studying biology. I've been to 9 MUN conferences in three countries, of which five have been as a crisis delegate. Apart from MUN, I like politics and reading science fiction. I can speak five languages, three fluently and two more with relative ease.

Fun fact: I am an avid football and Formula One fan.



**Russian Federation Chair: Bekki Preston**



Hello Everyone! My name is Bekki and I'm an (ex) Student of the best University in the world (That's Leeds) who did Russian and Spanish! But some of you may recognise me because last year I was President! Stepping down from too much responsibility (Thanks Louis!) I'm taking on my one true love - Crisis. I've been on committees for Crisis for as long as I can remember - including a wild Best Delegate for destroying most of the Caucasus as the mighty Nagorno-Karabakh. And outside of MUN I'm working in travel and tourism, booking hotels mostly! I'm also notorious for being found in Revs too often....

Looking forward to seeing people old and new and having a great Conference!

# History leading up to the Crisis

## **5<sup>th</sup> March 1946 – Churchill gives his “Iron Curtain” speech**

With the war in Europe over, new divisions began to form between the former allies. Ex-British Prime Minister Winston Churchill puts words to this, declaring an “iron curtain” had descended across Europe, and that an Anglo-American alliance would be needed to counter the new eastern threat.

## **4<sup>th</sup> April 1949 – the birth of NATO**

Building from the Treaties of Dunkirk and Brussels, a new alliance is negotiated to include several new countries – most notably the United States. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation is born – pledging to a pact of mutual defence in response to any external party. While the USSR is not explicitly mentioned, it is clear that this alliance will serve to prevent any further expansion of its influence.

## **27<sup>th</sup> June 1950 – NATO members enter the war in Korea**

Resolution 83 is passed by the United Nations Security Council, calling on member nations to provide military assistance to the Republic of Korea against its northern aggressor. A number of NATO signatories met this call, joining the conflict. While officially belligerent, the USSR played a key role in the conflict, sending guns, planes and pilots to fly them on behalf of the North Korean regime. Unknown to the wider world, this resulted in direct fighting between NATO and Soviet forces – something that would occur a number of times during the supposedly ‘cold’ war.

## **18<sup>th</sup> February 1952 – Turkey joins NATO**

Feeling threatened by the increasingly powerful and expansionist USSR, Turkey decides to join NATO and allows for the deployment of nuclear missiles in its borders. The addition of Turkey to NATO shocks the USSR as it now shares a border with the alliance. In an effort to counter this power imbalance, the USSR deploys nuclear missiles in Cuba – leading to the Cuba missile crisis. Furthermore, Turkey’s control over the Strait of Istanbul ends any idea of the USSR’s Navy being able to access the Mediterranean via their ports in the Black Sea.

## **21<sup>st</sup> September 1953 – Operation Moolah is successful**

Desperate to ensure no Soviet jets fell into the hands of the western powers during the Korean war, pilots were ordered not to fly near the coast or front lines – ensuring that if



any jets were downed, they could not be captured, or their soviet pilots identified. Nevertheless the US offered \$100,000

to any pilot who defected with a working MiG-15 – something that eventually occurred, though after the conflict's end. Performing tests on the plane, the US learnt much about current soviet technology and the strengths and weaknesses of the plane. Luckily for the soviets however, this was an era of fast technological advancement, and by the time of its capture the jet had already been superseded by the MiG-17. Had this later model fallen into NATO hands, the effects may have been considerably worse for the Soviets.

### **26<sup>th</sup> December 1991 – the dissolution of the USSR**

The Cold War comes to an end as the USSR is broken up into 15 post-soviet states, the largest of which being the Russian Federation (76% of USSR land mass). With this, NATO lost its de facto primary adversary and military spending began to fall, as the alliance shifted its focus to include humanitarian and anti-piracy work. Over the next decade NATO would continue to grow, including many former soviet bloc countries.

### **27<sup>th</sup> January 1994 – the F35 programme is born**

The Joint Advanced Strike Technology office is established to manage the development of NATO's next generation stealth fighter jet. Costing \$1.5 trillion over the next two decades, the research would culminate in the F35 – stealth fighter expected to serve in NATO militaries until 2070. This jet was a joint effort between a number of NATO members, and its construction and research costs were split between them (the US taking the largest share)

### **18<sup>th</sup> March 2014 – Crimean Peninsula is annexed by a resurgent Russia**

The world is taken by surprise when a referendum is held in the Crimea, deciding to succeed from Ukraine and join the Russian Federation after a period of violence. Despite admissions from the Kremlin that Russian special forces were active in the region and protests from the General Assembly of the UN no action is taken, and the region is incorporated into Russia – marking the first territorial expansion of the country since the end of the second world war.

### **15<sup>th</sup> July 2016 – Turkish coup d'état attempt**

Explosions rock the Turkish capital of Ankara as a faction within the Turkish military attempts to oust the increasingly authoritarian President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Short of expressing support for the government, a number of Turkey's NATO allies (most notably the US's Barack Obama) are publicly silent during the event – only expressing support for the government once the coup has already failed. In retaliation, Erdoğan uses the coup attempt as an excuse to further tighten his grip on the presidency, arresting at least 77,000 individuals and allegedly engaging in a number of human rights abuses. Furthermore, Erdoğan claimed the coup was planned by Fethullah Gülen - a Turkish dissident living in the US.



During this purge, a number of Turkish officers attached to NATO command sought asylum in other countries, while the US refused to extradite Gülen to Turkey for trial. Both the UK and Germany vocally supported this decision, claiming there was no evidence he masterminded the coup. While unsuccessful, the coup exposed the divide between Turkey and its fellow NATO countries, pointing to the world that perhaps they'd have been happier if the coup had succeeded.

### **1<sup>st</sup> August 2018 – Congress suspends the sale the F35 to Turkey**

A partner in the F35 development programme since 2002, Turkey had been due to buy over 100 of the advanced jets but following a deal with Russia to buy the S400 surface to air missiles system, this sale has been put on hold. US officials are concerned that sensitive F35 technology designed to evade such a system could be compromised and used to improve the Russian air defence system if Turkey takes operates both at once. If these improvements made their way into Russian hands (as it is likely they would), then it could fundamentally undermine the \$1.5 trillion stealth jet's main selling point – its stealth!

### **13<sup>th</sup> January 2019 – Trump threatens to “devastate Turkey” in tweet**

Longstanding opponents of the PKK and their sister group, the YPG, Turkey sees the group's existence near Turkish border as a threat to the state, and lists both groups as terrorist organisations. The YPG in Syria have been US/UK allies since 2014 however, in the fight against ISIS and Assad. With Trump pushing for the pull-out of US troops from Syria, its is feared that Turkey will resume their persecution and attacks against the groups. In an effort to pre-empt this, Trump informs the world that he will “devastate Turkey economically if they hit the Kurds” via a tweet. Only time will tell if this will be enough...

## **Beginning of the crisis scenario:**

### **8<sup>th</sup> March 2019 – congress repeals F35 suspension**

A deal is reached to end the F35 impasse. Mere months before intended delivery, Turkey cancels their S400 order from Russia in order to buy the much more expensive Patriot missile system from the US, at a steep discount. While US President Donald Trump proclaimed the deal to be “tremendous” and “great for America”, it is suggested that the US may actually be making a steep loss on the deal in order to undercut the Russian price. Many military commentators declare this to be a national embarrassment but concede it may have been the only option to keep Turkey within the F35 programme. Over the following year, forty F35's get delivered to the Turkish air force and operational capacity is declared.



### **7th October 2019 – Erdoğan reshuffles cabinet following Russian ministerial visit**

Erdoğan publicly fires a number of his cabinet ministers – citing policy disagreements. International commentators suggest this may be an attempt to further strengthen his grip on power amidst allegations of suppressing rival political parties. One minister cited multiple disagreements on “changes to established foreign policy” but has since declined interview with any foreign media. Some suggest that he may have been threatened by individuals loyal to Erdoğan, while others note how soon this all occurred following a recent state visit by the Russian foreign minister. Is there something wider going on here?

### **12<sup>th</sup> December 2019 – Turkish F35s strike Kurdish position in Syria**

Late on the 12<sup>th</sup> December, Turkish F35’s penetrate into Syrian air space, bombing a number of Kurdish positions ahead of a planned Turkish advance to disrupt the YPG in the region. President Trump is furious, sending out a series of now deleted tweets, while a white house press briefing states “the president had an engaging discussion with our Turkish allies, regarding future cooperation in the region”. The planned Turkish advance did not take place and no further bombing attempts were made.

### **4<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – F35 goes down over Crimea**

Reports are still coming in, but the Turkish government has just admitted that an F35 has been forced to make a crash landing in the Crimea following engine trouble during patrols over the black sea. The pilot has managed to evacuate the craft unharmed after bringing it down in farmland. While the Turkish government is claiming he followed protocol to destroy the craft on landing, footage has emerged on YouTube from Crimean locals of Russian forces recovering the lightly damaged craft. NATO is demanding the return of the aircraft, while Russia is yet to respond.

**The Crisis begins!**



## Committees:

The world is at a tipping point, and if action is not taken, it could begin to tumble. Since the dissolution of the USSR, the balance of international power has slowly been tipping in favour of NATO as it has expanded through central and Eastern Europe while Russia's economy continued to decline due to sanctions. With Russia's annexment of Crimea and its interference in the Ukrainian civil war however, many suggest that it may be on the rise again. While the F35 situation is the hot topic on people's minds, it is indicative of the wider split occurring between Turkey and the rest of NATO. This may be the opportunity Russia has been waiting for to drive back NATO's eastward expansion and perhaps bring a strategically positioned partner into its sphere of influence...

### **Cabinet: NATO**

It is integral that the F35 is not allowed to remain in Russia's hands. Not only could it undermine the trillions spent in its development in the first place, but if studied for long enough it could project Russian stealth technology forwards decades. It also needs to be ascertained how any of this was allowed to happen in the first place! Why did the engine fail and why was the jet so close to Russia when it did? More so, why was the plane allowed to fall into Russian hands when it crashed! It needs to be established what went on here and if foul play could be the cause. Furthermore, some are calling for the issue of Turkey itself to be addressed. How has NATO allowed one of its earliest members to fall so close to what some deem to be a dictatorship? How has it been allowed to flirt so openly with Russia – the very country NATO was founded to contain? The leaders of the western world are split on this issue, but it has to be addressed.

### **Cabinet: Russian federation**

The pride of NATO in their hands, and a traditional enemy close to tearing itself apart – national prestige has not been so high since the days of the USSR! Putin's government has a chance to turn the tide of history and tip the balance of the world order, but it won't be easy. The Russian economy is still weak following years of sanctions and despite the current uplift recent events have had, the threat of support for democratic reforms has been growing faster than the government has been able to quash them. Russia is at a pivotal moment, handled well, current events may be the key to making Russia a global superpower once more, but if the potential is not acted on, future historians may see this as the missed opportunity that brought down an autocracy.