GIS MUN 4.0
YOUNG LEADERS' CONCLAVE

UNSC

Agenda: New trend of Authoritarian Leadership and its Impact on International Peace, Security for Regional Stability & Global Governance.

Participants:
Students of Grade 9 to Grade 12

Committee Strength:
30 (Double Delegation)

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Honourable Member State Representatives,

Welcome to the Security Council simulated at GISMUN, 2024. The agenda for our meeting has been set as *"New trend of Authoritarian Leadership and its impact on international peace, security for regional stability and global governance"*.

While the theme here has been developed keeping in mind the current scenario, this document merely acts as a tool for substantive negotiations in the council proceedings. Please keep in mind your national interests and your country's limitations during the entirety of the council proceedings.

1.   Anything that this study guide provides is a framework for further research. The Executive Board has made every effort to ensure that this study guide is as comprehensive as possible, including a range of perspectives and approaches to give you a solid understanding of the subject matter covered in the agenda. The readings included in it come from a variety of sources. I cannot emphasize enough how crucial it is that you look up your own sources, particularly since we place a high value on foreign policy conformity and the study guides won't address your specific foreign policies. It is also probable that, due to my incomplete understanding, I have also overlooked some vital viewpoints, ideas, or efforts that are highly successful or might be put into practice in the future.

2.   Although the content in some of the readings in this guide may be outdated, the primary objective is to use them to understand the core ideas and principles of certain policies. You would both benefit greatly from becoming familiar with the main idea and pertinent aspects of the agenda.

3.   We are following the Security Council procedure in the committee, which looks for consensus-building rather than conflicting and adverse debate. Please use this as the foundation for your investigation. Delegates frequently just follow studies that take a more hostile and accusing stance. I would strongly advise against this. Please focus on issues where there may be common ground across all states.

Read widely and attentively. Be mindful of your domestic and foreign policies. I wish you all the best and please do not hesitate to contact if you have any queries or even if you just want to have a casual chat about the agenda item.

Karhtik Mohanty

Chairperson

Email id: karhtik1108@gmail.com

Instructions to all Member State Representatives

Adherence to Code of Conduct and Diplomatic Decorum: All participants are expected to adhere both in letter and spirit to the Rules of Procedure of the Security Council. This framework places a strong emphasis on the utmost respect and diplomatic courtesy among all individuals involved, including delegates, conference officials, and organizing committee members. Any instance of disrespect or a lack of diplomatic courtesy will result in consequences. It is imperative to maintain behavior that befits the status of a diplomat.

Promoting Consensus through Healthy Debates: Our primary objective in this forum is to build consensus among member states. Debates should be characterized by healthy discussions rather than confrontational exchanges. While your oratory skills are commended, it's essential that these skills are used constructively and contribute to the collective progress of the committee.

Balanced Skills Assessment: It is crucial to recognize that your overall assessment will be a culmination of various skills, including foreign policy knowledge, research acumen, diplomatic finesse, and more. Rather than concentrating solely on one aspect, delegates are encouraged to strike a harmonious balance among these skills in their engagement.

Transparent Explanation of Committee Procedure: Before commencing the committee proceedings, a comprehensive explanation of the procedural aspects will be provided. First-time delegates may have concerns about procedural nuances, but please rest assured that the Executive Board is committed to offering guidance and ensuring that you gain a realistic understanding of diplomatic proceedings.

Recognition Factors and Fairness: In larger committees, it's possible that you may not be recognized to speak as frequently as you might wish. Recognition decisions take into account various factors and are not indicative of bias. It is emphasized that any disparities in recognition are purely circumstantial and not reflective of any intent to disadvantage any delegate or delegation.

Extensive and Varied Research: I strongly recommend diligent and extensive research that goes beyond the confines of the provided study guide. While the study guide serves as a valuable framework, it is essential for delegates to

expand upon it and tailor their research to align with their state's unique perspectives and positions.

Punctuality: Delegates are expected to adhere to punctuality throughout the committee sessions.

Focusing on Committee Conviction: As diplomats, your primary role is to persuade and convince the committee of your proposals and positions. The bureau's role, to the furthest extent possible, is that of a moderator and facilitator. Therefore, direct your efforts towards convincing fellow member state representatives rather than the chairperson.

Confidentiality of Diplomatic Chits: Diplomatic chits, used for discreet communication between states, are held in the highest regard and are protected by established codes of diplomatic conduct. Such communications are exempt from scrutiny by the bureau, secretariat, or International Press without the explicit consent of the delegations involved. It's important to note that this rule may not apply in cases of sexual harassment.
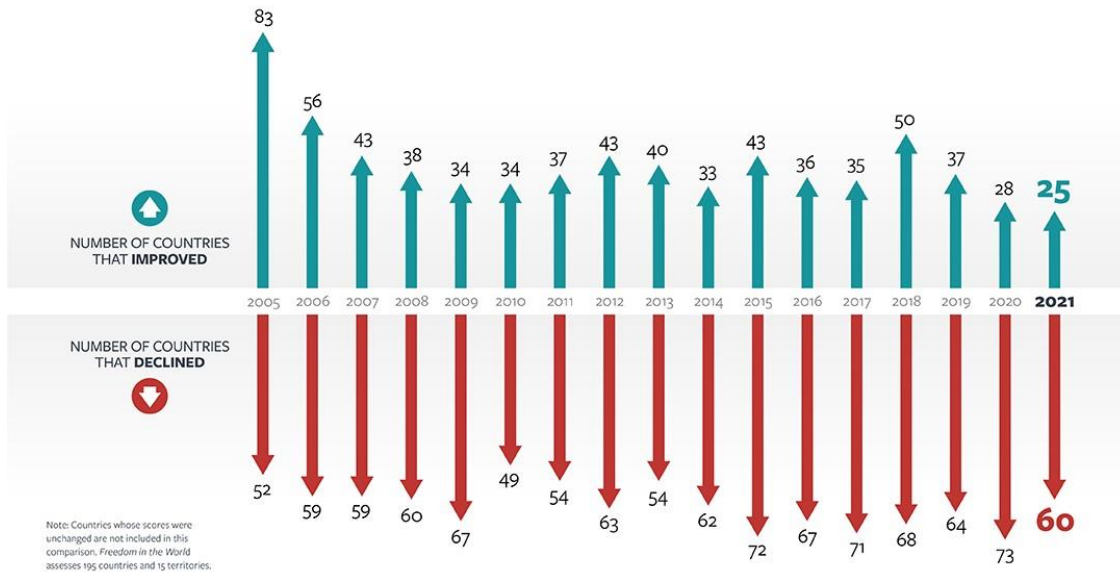
INTRODUCTION TO UNSC

The United Nations Security Council, or UNSC, is the leading forum for discussing urgent international matters. Comparable to a prestigious legislature, the United Nations Security Council bears the significant duty of preserving global peace and security. Every participating country takes on a significant role, much like a diplomatic protagonist, and participates in the process of making decisions as a group. In this prestigious council, important issues like nuclear non-proliferation and counterterrorism are the focus of intense discussion and negotiation. Therefore, involvement in the UNSC committee requires a dedication to the complexities of global politics and international diplomacy.

INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA ITEM

Global freedom faces a dire threat. Around the world, the enemies of liberal democracy—a form of self-government in which human rights are recognized and every individual is entitled to equal treatment under law—are accelerating their attacks. Authoritarian regimes have become more effective at co-opting or circumventing the norms and institutions meant to support basic liberties, and at providing aid to others who wish to do the same. In countries with long-established democracies, internal forces have exploited the shortcomings in their systems, distorting national politics to promote hatred, violence, and unbridled power. Those countries that have struggled in the space between democracy and authoritarianism, meanwhile, are increasingly tilting toward the latter. The global order is nearing a tipping point, and if democracy's defenders do not work together to help guarantee freedom for all people, the authoritarian model will prevail.

16 Years of Democratic Decline

Countries with aggregate score declines in *Freedom in the World* have outnumbered those with gains every year for the past 16 years.

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES THAT IMPROVED

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
83	56	43	38	34	34	37	43	40	33	43	36	35	50	37	28	25

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES THAT DECLINED

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
52	59	59	60	67	49	54	63	54	62	72	67	71	68	64	73	60

Note: Countries whose scores were unchanged are not included in this comparison. *Freedom in the World* assesses 195 countries and 15 territories.

Freedom House

This infographic is from the *Freedom in the World 2022* report by freedomhouse.org

During this period of democratic decline, checks on abuse of power and human rights violations have eroded. In the decades after World War II, the United Nations and other international institutions promoted the notion of fundamental rights, and democracies offered support—however unevenly—in their domestic and foreign policies as they strove to create an open international system built on shared resistance to totalitarianism. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, leaders of countries in transition felt compelled to publicly embrace the same ideals in order to win acceptance in the international community, even if their commitment was only skin deep. Governments that relied on external economic or military support had to stage at least superficially credible elections and respect some institutional checks on their power, among other concessions, to maintain their good standing.

For much of the 21st century, however, democracy's opponents have labored persistently to dismantle this international order and the restraints it imposed on their ambitions. The fruits of their exertions are now apparent. The leaders of China, Russia, and other dictatorships have succeeded in shifting global incentives, jeopardizing the consensus that democracy is the only viable path to prosperity and security, while encouraging more authoritarian approaches to governance.

Countries in every region of the world have been captured by authoritarian rulers in recent years. In 2021 alone, Nicaragua's incumbent president won a new term in a tightly orchestrated election after his security forces arrested opposition candidates and deregistered civil society organizations. Sudan's generals seized power once again, reversing democratic progress made after the 2019 ouster of former dictator Omar al-Bashir. And as the United States abruptly withdrew its military from Afghanistan, the elected government in Kabul collapsed and gave way to the Taliban, returning the country to a system that is diametrically opposed to democracy, pluralism, and equality.

At the same time, democracies are being harmed from within by illiberal forces, including unscrupulous politicians willing to corrupt and shatter the very institutions that brought them to power. This was arguably most visible last year in the United States, where rioters stormed the Capitol on January 6 as part of an organized attempt to overturn the results of the presidential election. But freely elected leaders from Brazil to India have also taken or threatened a variety of antidemocratic actions, and the resulting breakdown in shared values among democracies has led to a weakening of these values on the international stage.

Authoritarian systems have proven extraordinarily resilient, often outlasting predictions of their demise by decades and resisting external efforts to transform them. To persist, such regimes must overcome significant challenges, including the need to maintain elite constellations of power in the face of external threats, suppress social mobilization by disenfranchised groups, escape sanctions and other external pressure points, and control a public narrative of stability and progress.

Autocratic rulers require domestic leverage—often in the form of political and economic capital, which can be achieved through the tools of repression, propaganda, and instrumentalization of State institutions. But they also frequently rely on a range of external sources of support, including direct help from powerful States that may provide financial assistance and/or advice on co-opting opponents. What are often termed "linkages" between authoritarian regimes allow two or more political elites to subvert sanctions regimes and bolster respective economies, while sharing lessons on repressive forms of rule.

PEACEBUILDING IN AUTHORITARIAN SETTINGS

International peacebuilding frequently must address systems of authoritarianism. Civil conflicts tend to break out in authoritarian systems, which in turn create fertile conditions for conflict relapse and recurrence. Civil wars erode State institutions, destroy public confidence in the State, damage economic development, and tend to exacerbate underlying socioeconomic inequalities. Instead of transitions to democratic forms of rule, the immediate aftermath of civil conflict tends to offer opportunities for further concentrations of power as moderates are marginalized and violent, oppressive groups take advantage of temporary power vacuums.

On its face, peacebuilding tends to be directly opposed to authoritarianism, focused instead on inclusive forms of governance, free elections, and power-sharing arrangements. UN peacebuilding interventions typically include electoral assistance, capacity-building for State institutions, civic education, mediation focused on bringing political parties together, and other efforts broadly emphasizing democratization.

However, the success of UN peacebuilding to date is at best mixed, especially in terms of its goal of improving democratic processes and reducing authoritarian forms of rule. Some scholarship has found that democratization tends to improve in settings where a UN peacebuilding mission is deployed, whereas others are more skeptical about the direct causal impact of peacebuilding on democratization. Indeed, a growing body of literature has highlighted the potential negative side effects of international peacebuilding, including the tendency for international interventions to strengthen elite concentrations of power, especially where leaders promise democratic reforms without delivering.

Scholarship to date, however, has not investigated this unintended consequence of peacebuilding empirically, instead focusing almost exclusively on the positive links between peacebuilding and democratization. The result is that authoritarianism is considered as the absence of democratization and/or

the lack of good governance, rather than a set of mechanisms that enable leaders to maintain concentrated and illiberal forms of power.

ROLE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL- A DOUBLE EDGED SWORD

On the one hand, settings in which the Security Council has issued a mandate and deployed a peace operation have a significant advantage in combatting authoritarian tendencies in peacebuilding. The attention of the Council may act as a spotlight on repressive behavior, while often operations will have significant resources to gather information, monitor human rights violations, and even at times support democratic processes. This was the case in the three case studies of Haiti, Cambodia, and the DRC, where in each the UN had a specific mandate related to supporting democratic transformation, credible elections, and protecting political space. In contrast, settings without a peace operation may more easily fall below the international community's radar, providing the UN with less leverage to push back on domineering governments. The 2018 reform process, which ostensibly creates a more political role for UN Resident Coordinators across the UN system, has done little thus far to equip non-mission settings with more capacities or leverage to counter authoritarian regimes.

However, the mandates of peace operations also may constrain the UN's ability to resist authoritarian pushes by governments and may indeed position the UN even more as a service provider for the State. This is particularly the case where the UN operation is mandated to support a peace agreement that prioritizes SSR (Security Sector Reform), disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), or other activities that necessarily involve substantial support to the State. MONUC/MONUSCO, for example, has fairly consistently been mandated to support the State's SSR, DDR, and stabilization activities, the latter of which has involved large-scale State-led institutional development with UN funding. In fact, across a wide range of peace operations, there is a strong tendency for the mandates to prioritize the State, whether through capacity-building to State institutions, support to national reforms, or programmatic support to State-run projects. Where the UN is mandated to use force, these tendencies are even stronger, given the UN's partnership with national security services (joint patrols, joint operations, etc.). In fact, even

peacebuilding missions that do not have use of force mandates are susceptible to this tendency, such as in Guinea-Bissau. In 2008, the PBC (Peacebuilding Commission) adopted a Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau that set key priorities as: strengthening law enforcement, SSR, and improving the government's public administration system. These priorities were crucial in setting the direction of funding for the broader international peacebuilding support to the country over the subsequent ten years, during which nearly half of ODA (Official Development Assistance) went to the host government and well over half of the international peacebuilding funding by international donors was categorized as supporting CGF (Core Government Functions).

Ultimately, where the Security Council has issued a mandate, the UN and its partners in the international community have a strong incentive to align resources behind it. As a State-centric organization that tends to see stability in terms of State monopoly of resources and legitimate violence, Council mandates exhibit a strong preference for support to the State. The result is that settings with Council mandates may be the most reliant on (and most likely to support) the State, even when the political leadership acts in authoritarian, undemocratic ways.

CASE STUDIES OF AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

Here are the two case studies in the same format without any bold text:

1. Belarus under Alexander Lukashenko – Regional Instability in Europe

Background:

Alexander Lukashenko, who has ruled Belarus since 1994, is often referred to as "Europe's last dictator." His regime is characterized by a tight grip on political power, repression of opposition, and control of media and civil society. Lukashenko's leadership style is highly authoritarian, with fraudulent elections, crackdowns on protests, and human rights violations being the norm.

Impact on Regional Stability:

- 2020 Election Crisis and Protests: Following the disputed 2020 presidential election, where Lukashenko claimed victory amid widespread allegations of vote-rigging, mass protests erupted across Belarus. His government responded with brutal crackdowns on protesters, activists, and journalists, leading to thousands of arrests and reports of torture.

- International Relations with Russia: Lukashenko's dependence on Vladimir Putin's Russia for political and economic support has deepened. Belarus has increasingly become a vassal state for Russian interests, particularly evident in the 2021 migrant crisis, where Belarus was accused of orchestrating a migrant influx into the EU as a form of "hybrid warfare" in retaliation for sanctions.

- Support for Russia's Invasion of Ukraine: Belarus has provided critical logistical and territorial support to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, allowing Russian troops to launch attacks from Belarusian soil. This has made Belarus a de facto participant in the conflict, further destabilizing Eastern Europe.

Global Impact:

- EU and Western Sanctions: Lukashenko's regime has faced sanctions from the EU, the US, and other Western powers, isolating Belarus economically and

diplomatically. The growing authoritarianism in Belarus has also contributed to the broader erosion of democratic norms in Eastern Europe.

2. Venezuela under Nicolás Maduro – Humanitarian Crisis and RegionalInstability

Background:

Nicolás Maduro has been the president of Venezuela since 2013, following the death of Hugo Chávez. His regime has been marked by a shift towards authoritarianism, with increasing centralization of power, dissolution of democratic institutions, and suppression of opposition. Economic mismanagement and corruption have led to one of the worst humanitarian crises in the region, with hyperinflation, widespread poverty, and mass emigration.

Impact on Regional Stability:

- Economic Collapse and Refugee Crisis: Under Maduro's leadership, Venezuela's once-prosperous oil-based economy collapsed due to corruption, sanctions, and poor governance. The resulting hyperinflation and scarcity of basic goods have led to a humanitarian crisis, with more than 7 million Venezuelans fleeing the country. Neighboring countries like Colombia, Brazil, and Peru have struggled to cope with the influx of refugees, leading to tensions and instability in the region.

- Political Instability and Authoritarian Rule: The Venezuelan government has dissolved the opposition-controlled National Assembly and established a pro-Maduro Constituent Assembly, effectively undermining any semblance of democracy. The suppression of opposition parties, arbitrary arrests, and violent crackdowns on protests have led to widespread condemnation.

- Militarization and Armed Groups: Venezuela's government has armed civilian militias (known as "colectivos") to suppress dissent, and the country has become a hub for organized crime, drug trafficking, and paramilitary activity, further destabilizing the region.

Global Impact:

- US and International Sanctions: Venezuela has faced extensive sanctions from the US, EU, and other nations, aimed at pressuring the Maduro regime to restore democratic processes. However, these sanctions have also contributed to the deepening economic crisis.

- Geopolitical Alignments: Venezuela has forged strong ties with other authoritarian states such as Russia, China, and Iran, which have provided economic and political support to the regime. This has allowed Maduro to resist international pressure while undermining the Western-led liberal international order.

These examples highlight how authoritarian leadership can cause significant harm not only to their own countries but also to regional and international stability.

SUGGESTED READINGS

1. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2016-12-05/how-democracies-fall-apart
2. https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2022/global-expansion-authoritarian-rule
3. https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2022/
4. https://ucigcc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Carnegie-Clark-Zucker-Working-Paper_2.12.24.pdf
5. https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2022/global-expansion-authoritarian-rule
6. http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:8035/UNU_Peacebuilding_FINAL_WEB.pdf

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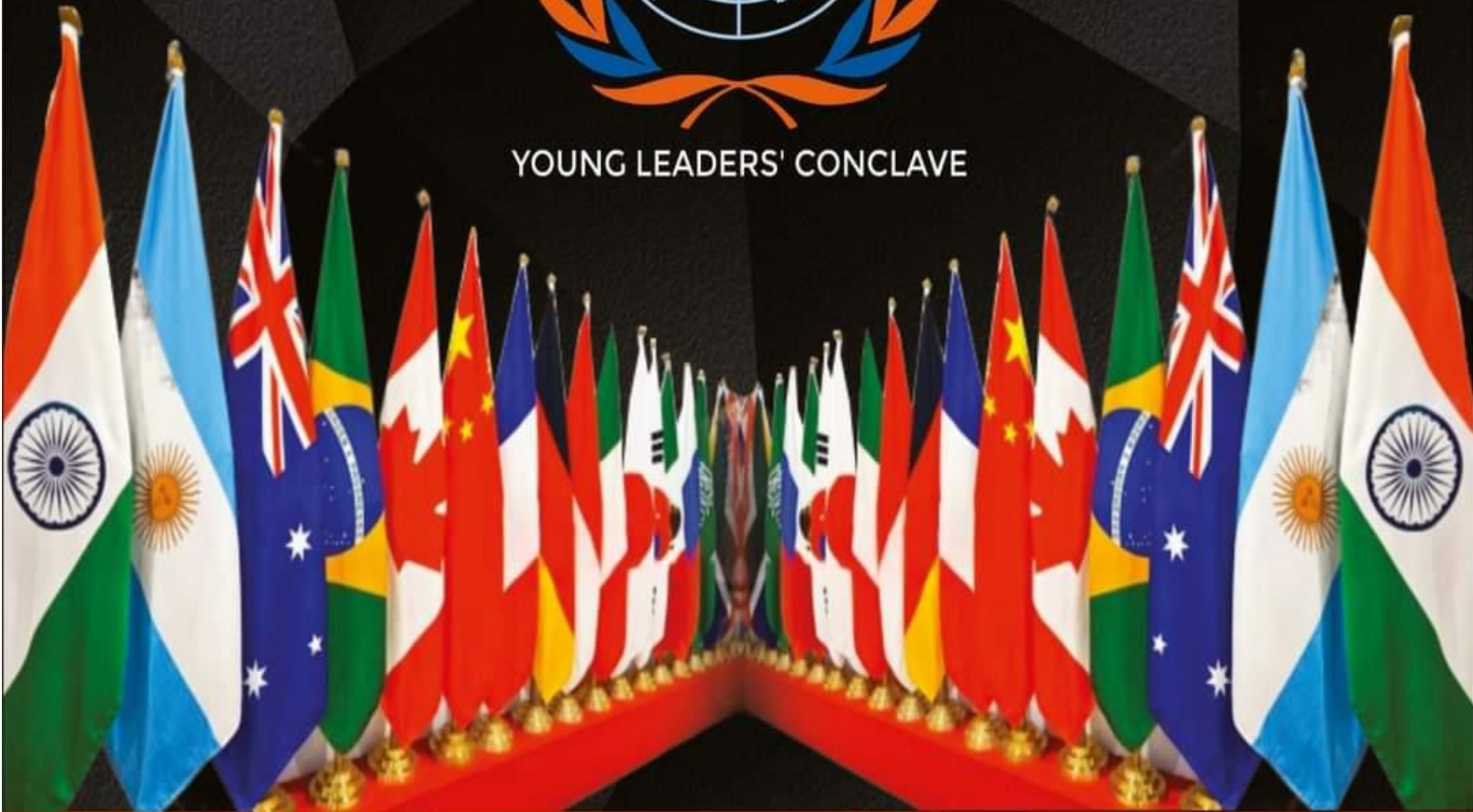
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