



| STUDY GUIDE

HISTORICAL CRISIS

Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988): Iraq's Cabinet



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LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL



1. Letter from the Secretary General

Dear delegates and faculty advisors of PUCP MUN 2025,

It is an honor to address you as the Secretary-General of the 14th edition of PUCP MUN 2025. Over the past seven years of participating in Model United Nations, taking on various roles and engaging at both national and international levels, I have had the privilege of experiencing the transformation these events bring to young people. This experience has given me a unique perspective on MUN: they are one of the most powerful tools for youth education and empowerment, more than we often realize. MUN has changed my life, offering me the chance to enhance my leadership, public speaking, and teamwork skills, as well as gain a deep understanding of international issues. This long but rewarding journey has now led me to the honor of leading the biggest conference in the country, with the primary goal of providing you with a unique and formative experience at all levels.

For this edition, we have managed to bring together more than 1,000 participants and, through great effort, we have established valuable connections with the United Nations and other international organizations. With the support of Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, this conference is grounded on three fundamental pillars: academic and organizational excellence, decentralization, and the formative experience we offer.

From my perspective, we have identified three key issues that will guide this conference. First, closing educational gaps to provide an accessible space for all students. Second, bringing Model United Nations closer to the real work of the United Nations. And third, placing the human factor at the center of discussions, recognizing that behind every committee and every debate are human lives directly impacted by the issues we address.

I deeply thank the team that has made this edition possible, as well as PUCP for its unwavering support. To you, delegates and participants, I assure you that you will experience a journey filled with learning and personal growth during PUCP MUN 2025. We eagerly await your participation and hope that you make the most of this opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Micaela Loza Rivera", is placed below the "Sincerely," text.

Micaela Loza Rivera
Secretary-General of PUCP MUN 2025



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2. Introduction to the Committee

The Iraqi Crisis Committee gathers the most influential Iraqi people during the Iranian-Iraqi war. From military men to political leaders, the characters found in the committee are people whose actions had direct consequences on the development of the war and the decisions the Iraqi government took during these times. This organ is composed of the ruling circle of the time, led by Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), the ministers chosen by Hussein and the generals that led the Iraqi army, as well as important diplomats who had a crucial role during the conflict.

The committee's main objective is to coordinate strategic decisions regarding areas such as military, economic, diplomatic or related to social mobilization, all of them pivotal at times of war.

The structure reflects the centralized and authoritarian nature of the Ba'athist state, where all decisions ultimately stemmed from Saddam himself and his close allies. Despite this concentration of authority, internal rivalries, shifting alliances, and institutional divisions were characteristic of Iraq's wartime decision-making process, making the committee dynamic and unpredictable. At the top of the hierarchy stands President Saddam Hussein, serving as both Head of State and Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). Around him are senior Ba'ath Party officials such as Tariq Aziz, the articulate Foreign Minister responsible for diplomacy and international image; Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, Vice Chairman of the RCC and loyal enforcer of Ba'athist ideology; and Taha Yassin Ramadan, Prime Minister, overseeing domestic governance and wartime logistics. Together, this political bloc manages Iraq's strategic direction, diplomatic outreach, and ideological consistency. Parallel to the political leadership operates the military command, led by Defense Minister Adnan Khairallah and senior generals such as Hussein Rashid al-Tikriti. This faction directs frontline operations, mobilization efforts, and the coordination of Iraq's air and ground forces. Strategic decisions within this sector often clash with political ambitions, reflecting tensions between military pragmatism and Saddam's personal control. Supporting both political and military branches is the intelligence and security apparatus, the regime's most feared arm.

Figures like Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti and Ali Hassan al-Majid control the Mukhabarat and internal security, overseeing espionage, propaganda, and domestic repression. Their influence ensures loyalty within the government and silences dissent in wartime.

Complementing these groups are the economic and propaganda wings, managing Iraq's oil revenues, supply chains, and information warfare. Economic planners such as Hikmat Mizban Ibrahim al-Azzawi work to sustain war expenditures, while propaganda officials like Latif Nassif Jassim maintain national morale and shape Iraq's public narrative.

This committee thus functions as a condensed model of Saddam's Iraq: authoritarian, factionalized, and constantly balancing military necessity with political survival.

3. Introduction to the Topic

The year is 1980. A strategic opportunity arises in Baghdad that cannot be ignored: the Islamic Revolution has dismantled the chain of command in Iran, and despite the Algiers Agreement, Tehran has broken its promises and stirred up trouble in the border provinces. On 22 September, President Saddam Hussein ordered Iraqi forces to cross the border and launch an offensive to secure Shatt al-Arab and stabilize the area. Fighter planes attacked Iranian air bases, while numerous ground units advanced towards Khorramshahr and Abadan. The aim was to force the new and unstable Republic to retreat, prevent the spread of its revolution, and consolidate a position that would guarantee Iraqi hegemony over vital routes.

In the war room, the next steps are carefully calculated. In Tehran, a reorganization is underway, the army inherited from the Shah is fractured and the religious leadership is barely managing to improvise its defence. Delegates must decide quickly whether to turn initial successes into a decisive victory by establishing a favourable border through military force, or to seek an international settlement that recognises Iraqi demands regarding the river corridor and the security of Arab communities in southwestern Iran. Iraq's goal is not endless war, but peace on terms that prevent future threats and secure the nation's role as a bulwark in the region.

4. Historical Background

Saddam Hussein's Iraq started in 1979. He rose to power after forcing the then reigning president, Ahmed al-Bakr, to resign. He was but the third general in a row to become president after his predecessor and Abdul Karim Qasim, the leader of the Free Officers movement that dethroned the Hashemite dynasty in 1958 during the 14 July Revolution. In this sense, Iraq had been under a strict, nationalistic, military junta of the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) for over twenty years prior to Hussein's rise to power. As tensions with post-revolutionary Iran escalated, the council evolved into a wartime cabinet charged with directing every aspect of Iraq's political, military, and economic strategy.

The RCC combined executive, legislative, and military authority under a single structure, with Saddam Hussein as its chairman and ultimate arbiter of power. Its membership consisted primarily of high-ranking Ba'ath Party officials, military commanders, and trusted figures from Saddam's inner circle. This concentration of loyalty ensured that decision-making remained highly centralized. While the council formally deliberated on state affairs, in practice, it functioned as an extension of Saddam's personal leadership,

executing his directives and maintaining internal unity through fear, patronage, and ideological discipline.

When Iraq launched its invasion of Iran in September 1980, the RCC assumed full responsibility for the coordination of the war effort. Its early sessions reflected a sense of confidence, as Saddam and his advisers believed that Iran's internal instability following the 1979 revolution would allow for a swift victory.

However, as the conflict stalemated and Iranian counteroffensives pushed Iraqi forces back, the RCC's role expanded from planning short-term offensives to managing an existential national crisis. It oversaw the reorganization of the armed forces, the mobilization of the Republican Guard, and the implementation of extensive propaganda campaigns to maintain public morale and justify the war as a defense of Arab nationalism against Persian and revolutionary threats.

Throughout the 1980s, the council also directed Iraq's diplomacy and war economy. It authorized the solicitation of financial and logistical support from Gulf Arab states and the acquisition of foreign weapons through covert and overt channels. Simultaneously, the RCC supervised internal security through the intelligence services, suppressing dissent and ensuring the regime's stability amid the prolonged conflict. Decisions concerning chemical weapon deployment, scorched-earth tactics, and negotiations with foreign powers were all filtered through this tightly controlled apparatus.

5. Background of the war

The Iran-Iraq War arose from a complex mix of historical rivalries, ethnic and religious tensions, and major political transformations in the region. Throughout the 20th century, relations between the two countries were marked by mutual distrust and territorial disputes that intensified over time. Historical and territorial rivalries played a key role in the origin of the conflict. Tensions were reignited in the late 1960s when the United Kingdom announced its withdrawal from the Persian Gulf, which reconfigured the regional geopolitical balance. A constant source of friction was the dispute over control of the Shatt al-Arab waterway, formed by the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. This river was of essential strategic value for maritime trade, and while Iran claimed that it belonged entirely to it, Iraq defended its division.

In 1975, Iraq's de facto ruler, Saddam Hussein, signed the Algiers Accords, whereby he ceded some of Iraq's territorial claims, including the eastern bank of the Shatt al-Arab, in exchange for Iran ceasing its interference in Iraq's internal affairs. However, Hussein later considered these agreements to be unbalanced and humiliating. Tensions escalated further when, in 1971, Iran occupied two Iraqi islands during the reign of Shah Mohammad

Reza Pahlavi, prompting Hussein to demand that Iran relinquish control of the islands of Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunb, located in the Persian Gulf.

On the other hand, political and religious tensions were also decisive factors in the outbreak of the conflict. The immediate cause was the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979, which overthrew the shah and established a theocratic regime under the leadership of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. This new government, authoritarian and deeply anti-Western in nature, sought to consolidate its power and project its ideology in the region. The leaders of the Islamic Republic openly expressed their intention to “export the revolution,” promoting the establishment of Shiite Islamic governments in other countries.

This revolutionary policy caused great concern in Iraq, a Shiite-majority country ruled by a Sunni minority led by Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi regime feared that the Shiite majority of its population (approximately 60%) would be inspired by the Iranian revolution and rebel against the government. At the same time, Hussein saw an opportunity in the Iranian situation. After the revolution, Iran was diplomatically isolated and plunged into disorder, with its armed forces weakened and in the midst of the hostage crisis with the United States. Taking advantage of this situation, Saddam sought to reaffirm Iraqi territorial claims and consolidate his regional leadership.

Among his main demands were the restoration of control over the Shatt al-Arab and recognition of the right to Arab self-determination in the Iranian province of Khuzestan, a rich oil-producing region inhabited mainly by ethnic Arabs. In this context, differences between Iran and Iraq quickly intensified and became increasingly visible through the media and growing verbal conflict, eventually leading to direct military confrontation.

6. Development of the war:

On September 22, 1980, Iraq launched a surprise invasion of Iran, framing it as a defensive measure against Iranian incursions and revolutionary subversion. In reality, it was a calculated offensive aimed at exploiting Iran's internal instability. Iraqi forces advanced across three main fronts, toward Khuzestan, Ilam, and along the Shatt al-Arab, with the expectation of a swift and decisive victory. At first, the campaign seemed successful. Iraqi troops captured several Iranian border towns, and Saddam publicly tore up the Algiers Agreement, declaring full Iraqi sovereignty over the Shatt al-Arab. Propaganda in Baghdad hailed the operation as a liberation of “Arab lands” from Persian control.

However, early optimism quickly faded. Iran, despite being politically unstable, rallied under Khomeini's leadership. Waves of Iranian volunteers, particularly members of the Basij militia, resisted fiercely. The Iraqi army, though large and well-equipped, was not prepared for prolonged warfare in difficult terrain. By mid-1981, Iraq's advance had stalled,

and Iranian counterattacks began to reclaim lost territory. In June 1982, Iranian forces recaptured Khorramshahr, a key city, marking a turning point in the conflict.

Iraq found itself on the defensive, facing not a collapsing enemy but a mobilized and ideologically driven one. Saddam was forced to withdraw from most of the occupied territories, publicly framing the retreat as a gesture of goodwill while secretly bracing for a long war. With Iran determined to overthrow Saddam Hussein and export its revolution to Baghdad, the war entered a grinding phase of attrition. Iraq now faced an existential threat. Khomeini refused to negotiate unless the Ba'ath regime was dismantled, forcing Saddam to consolidate power domestically and seek support abroad.

On the other side, the Arab Gulf monarchies, notably Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, poured billions of dollars into Iraq's war effort, viewing Baghdad as a bulwark against Iranian revolutionary expansion. Meanwhile, the United States, the Soviet Union, and several European countries provided varying degrees of intelligence and military support to Iraq, motivated by the desire to contain Iran. Domestically, Saddam Hussein used the war to consolidate authoritarian control. The Ba'ath Party promoted an intense cult of personality around Saddam, portraying him as the defender of Arab civilization against Persian aggression. Political repression deepened, as the regime crushed Shi'a dissent and Kurdish separatism, framing both as Iranian-backed subversion.

The balance of the war shifted again in 1986, when Iran captured the al-Faw Peninsula, Iraq's only direct access to the Persian Gulf. The loss was a severe strategic and psychological blow. Saddam responded by reorganizing the military command structure and granting more authority to his trusted generals, particularly Adnan Khairallah and Hussein Kamel.

At this stage, Iraq intensified its "War of the Cities", targeting Iranian urban centers with missile strikes while Iran retaliated with attacks on Baghdad and Basra. Simultaneously, both sides launched assaults on oil tankers and shipping in the Persian Gulf, drawing in U.S. naval forces and escalating international tensions.

By 1987–1988, Iraq had rebuilt its military strength, largely through foreign aid and arms purchases from France and the Soviet Union. Saddam's creation of the Republican Guard, an elite and well-trained corps, proved decisive. Iraq launched a series of successful offensives—Tawakalna ala Allah Operations—which recaptured al-Faw, the Majnoon Islands, and other key territories. The systematic use of chemical weapons, though widely condemned, broke Iranian morale and halted further advances. Facing massive casualties, economic exhaustion, and declining popular support, Iran accepted UN Security Council Resolution 598 in August 1988, effectively ending the war. Saddam Hussein proclaimed victory, even though the conflict ended in a stalemate with no territorial gains for either side.

Although Iraq emerged as the nominal victor, the war's consequences were devastating. The country's economy was in ruins, burdened by an estimated \$80 billion in debt, much of it owed to Gulf states. Infrastructure was shattered, and over half a million Iraqis were killed or wounded. Saddam's regime, however, survived, and even appeared stronger. The war had eliminated internal opposition and militarized Iraqi society, cementing Saddam's image as a heroic defender of Arabism. Yet beneath the surface, the state was deeply weakened. The massive debts and Iraq's demand for economic relief from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia would later fuel tensions that culminated in the 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

7. Iraqi Figures

- a. **Saddam Hussein:** President of Iraq and commander-in-chief; he launched the invasion of Iran in 1980, seeking territorial gains and regional dominance. His leadership defined the war's aggression and brutal tactics.
- b. **Tariq Aziz:** Iraq's Foreign Minister and Saddam's chief diplomat; he worked to justify Iraq's actions internationally and maintain Western and Arab support.
- c. **Adnan Khairallah:** Minister of Defense and Saddam's cousin; coordinated military operations and was considered one of Iraq's most competent commanders.
- d. **Ali Hassan al-Majid ("Chemical Ali"):** Oversaw chemical weapon use against Iranian forces and Kurdish civilians; a key figure in Iraq's chemical warfare strategy.
- e. **Hussein Kamel al-Majid:** Head of Iraq's weapons programs; supervised arms production and logistics during the war before later defecting to Jordan.
- f. **Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri:** Vice Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council; a senior political figure responsible for morale and internal mobilization.
- g. **Saadoun Hammadi:** Prime Minister during part of the war; managed Iraq's domestic front and economic policies supporting the war effort.
- h. **Abd al-Jabbar Shanshal:** Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Army; directed major offensives and defensive operations on the southern front.
- i. **Maher Abd al-Rashid:** Senior general commanding units in Basra and southern Iraq; known for leading key counterattacks against Iranian advances.

- j. **Hussein Rashid Mohammed:** Planned and executed large-scale ground operations, including some of Iraq's late-war offensives that pushed back Iranian troops.
- k. **Wafiq al-Samarrai:** High-ranking intelligence officer; later defected, providing insight into Iraq's military and intelligence strategies during the war.
- l. **Sabir al-Douri:** Head of Military Intelligence; coordinated battlefield intelligence and surveillance operations.
- m. **Riyadh al-Qaisi:** Senior diplomat and political adviser; supported Iraq's efforts to maintain international legitimacy during the prolonged conflict
- n. **Abd al-Salam Saeed al-Tikriti:** Senior officer in the Iraqi Air Force; coordinated numerous bombing campaigns targeting Iranian oil facilities and infrastructure during the early stages of the war.
- o. **Ra'ad Majid Rashid al-Hamdani:** Commander in the Republican Guard; later known for his leadership during key defensive operations near Basra toward the end of the conflict.
- p. **Ayad Futayyih al-Rawi:** Field commander and artillery specialist; played a key role in Iraq's use of heavy artillery barrages along the southern front.
- q. **Salah Omar al-Ali:** Senior Ba'ath Party member and political representative abroad; helped manage Iraq's image and foreign relations during the conflict years.
- r. **Hikmat al-Azzawi:** Economic advisor and later Minister of Finance; contributed to maintaining the war economy through resource allocation and debt management.
- s. **Nizar al-Khazraji:** Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Army during the late phase of the war; oversaw Iraq's major counteroffensives between 1986 and 1988 that pushed Iranian forces back.
- t. **Abd al-Wahab al-Qaysi:** Intelligence officer who specialized in coordinating reconnaissance missions on the Iranian frontlines and assessing enemy positions.
- u. **Sabah Mirza Mahmud:** Republican Guard officer and one of Saddam Hussein's bodyguards; commanded elite units during crucial stages of the conflict.

- v. **Muzahim Sa'dun**: Air Force general; led aerial operations during major offensives such as Operation Ramadan, ensuring air superiority over key battle zones.
- w. **Rafi Abd al-Latif Tilfah** _ Saddam Hussein's relative and intelligence official, helped coordinate security operations within Iraq to prevent dissent and maintain regime stability during wartime.

8. QARMAs

- a. How will Iraq define and achieve victory against Iran while preventing territorial losses?
- b. How will the government maintain internal security and suppress dissent during wartime?
- c. How will Iraq secure and sustain foreign military, financial, and diplomatic support?
- d. How will Iraq protect and fund its economy, oil production, and supply chains during the conflict?
- e. How will Iraq modernize and supply its armed forces to match Iran's mobilization?
- f. How will Iraq manage propaganda, control information, and maintain national morale?
- g. Under what conditions would Iraq negotiate peace, and what post-war objectives must be secured?

9. Position paper guidelines

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of each delegation's stance, possible solutions, and role within the committee. Delegates are encouraged to follow a structured format when drafting their documents, as this will facilitate the writing process and improve readability for the Director. Furthermore, to be eligible for an award, each delegate must submit a Position Paper before the established deadline.

In the first paragraph, delegates should outline their country's position on the topic, clearly demonstrating an understanding of their nation's policy. In the second paragraph, they may mention the main previous actions taken by the United Nations related to the issue. The impact of these actions on their country should be analyzed, explaining why they were successful or not. Actions taken by other international organizations and by the country itself regarding the issue may also be included.



In the final paragraph, which is the most important, delegates must present their proposals to address the problem. Each proposal should be supported with detailed information, covering the who, what, when, where, and how of its implementation.

The document must comply with the following format specifications: a maximum length of one page, line spacing of 1.15, Times New Roman font, font size 11, and 2.5 cm margins on all sides. A bibliography following APA 7 citation format must be included. It is essential that all references used are properly cited. The document must be submitted to the following email address: positionpaperspucpmun@gmail.com.

10. Bibliography:

CERRANDO BRECHAS

