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LEGATIO 4.0

THE KURUKSHETRA OF DIPLOMACY

LEGATIO 4.0 / STUDY GUIDE SERIES

CCC

BACKGROUND GUIDE

INDO-CHINA WAR CABINET

CONTINUOUS CRISIS COMMITTEE

AGENDA / FOCUS

A historical crisis simulation of the Sino-Indian border dispute and the Indo-China War Cabinet.

31 JUL – 02 AUG 2026

DELHI PUBLIC SCHOOL, SILIGURI

THE KURUKSHETRA OF DIPLOMACY

DELEGATE RESEARCH EDITION

LEGATIO 4.0

Continuous Crisis Committee (Indo-China War Cabinet)

Background Guide

LEGATIO MUN 2026

Letter from the Executive Board

Delegates,

Greetings and a very warm welcome to this year's simulation.

You are about to embark on a journey far beyond ordinary debate: a journey into the heat of history and politics, where every decision, every note, and every directive has the power to change the course of events. This guide shall act as the bridge between the Executive Board and the delegates.

A crisis committee is not just a test of research and rhetoric, but of character, strategy, and resilience under pressure. In the coming sessions, you will encounter breaking developments, unexpected challenges, and shifting alliances. Remember: in crisis, there are no spectators - only actors. Every action you take, whether through a directive, a communiqué, or a motion, will ripple through the committee and shape its destiny.

We urge you to approach this committee with courage, creativity, and conviction. Debate fiercely, negotiate wisely, and above all, never lose sight of the greater purpose of this simulation: to understand, to learn, and to grow as leaders of tomorrow.

All official notifications, crisis updates, and delegate resources will be made available on the delegates group through WhatsApp/any official mode of communication. Check in regularly, for each update may open a new door - or close one forever. We look forward to witnessing your brilliance unfold in committee.

With best wishes,

The Executive Board

SUGGESTED PATTERN FOR RESEARCHING

To start researching on CCC, participating members should do the following:

1. Start researching your respective portfolio and his/her political affiliations. As no definite document may be found which contains the stand of a party or an individual on a specific agenda, the delegates must do the tedious yet rewarding work of going through past news clippings/ magazine articles/party website/individual's website/social media handles/ YouTube videos to find statements on the said agenda. Further, a detailed understanding can be gained by studying the ideology and principles adopted by the party/individual.
2. After gaining knowledge about the portfolio, the delegates must start their research on the agenda at hand. This must be done by researching further upon the agenda using the footnotes and links given in the guide and from other sources such as academic papers, institutional or governmental reports, national reports, news articles, blogs etc.
3. Characterize the agenda into sub-topics and prepare speeches and statements on them. The delegates should also prepare a list of possible solutions and actions the committee can suggest/ adopt on the issue.
4. Assemble proof/evidence for any important piece of information/ allegation you are going to use in committee and keep your research updated using various news sources, specifically government studies or data released by the same.
5. To have an edge in the committee in terms of debate, delegates must also research about the other portfolios and try to find their contradictory statements or controversial stands on various issues to raise allegations/ substantial questions in the committee.

Lastly, we would expect all the delegates to put in serious efforts in research and preparation for the simulation and work hard to make it a fruitful learning experience for all.

History of Sino-Indian Border Dispute

China is India's largest neighbor, and they share a border of approximately 3,380 km. Relations between the two countries have always been less than cordial, much of it a reaction to the border dispute over a land area of over 125,000 square km. The dispute can be divided into three sections—east, middle, and west—involving areas of 125,000 square kilometers, 2,000 square kilometers, and 33,500 square kilometers, respectively.

The western section starts with the Karakoram mountain pass in the north to the Ngari Prefecture-La dwags-Himachal Pradesh intersection. This disputed area is known as the Aksai Chin region (meaning a 'desert of white stones') and is currently controlled by China. The dispute in the West pertains to the border between the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir and the Chinese territories of Xinjiang and Tibet. All three of these regions have proved troublesome to the host state, with each of them continuing to have strong separatist sentiments. The Sino-Indian border west of the Karakoram Pass has become the Sino-Pakistani border ever since Pakistan took over large parts of Kashmir in 1947-48, which it now calls Pakistan-occupied Kashmir or Azad Kashmir. It was formally delimited by the Sino-Pakistani border agreement in 1963, which further complicates matters.

In the middle section, the dispute is over the land which stretches from the Ngari Prefecture-La dwags-Punjab junction in the west to the India-China-Nepal junction in the east. This is a significantly smaller land area than in the eastern section. This encompasses areas of the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, as well as pilgrimage routes to Hindu places of worship near Lake Mansarovar and Mount Kailash.

In the east, it is the McMahon Line which is under scrutiny. This line starts from the India-China-Bhutan intersection in the west and goes up to the Brahmaputra River in the east. It comprises mostly the territory of the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, which has a population of over a million people.

Western Sector

India's claim to the eastern region is based on the Johnson Line, which was drawn in the 19th century. When Great Britain colonized Kashmir in 1846, it wanted to use Kashmir as the base to defend the northern frontiers of the empire. To protect these border claims, W.H. Johnson, who worked with the Survey of India, drew up the 'Johnson Line' in 1965 and placed Aksai Chin in Kashmir. Aksai Chin is a strategic point for the Chinese, despite being an uninhabited

and barren plateau, because it is a passage point between Tibet and the Xinjiang province. When India was firmly under British rule, it began to push the border forward into the Chinese side.

In 1896, a British agent in Kashgar was recorded saying that “Aksai Chin was a general name for an ill-defined and very elevated table land at the northeast of Ladakh and it was probably the case that part was in Chinese and part in British territory.” This shows that although the British were anxious to formally demarcate India’s borders with Afghanistan and Russia, it placed very little importance on its borders with China. At a meeting of the Russian, Chinese, and British Empires in the Pamirs, there were conflicting claims about territory in south Asia, especially the Kanjut region (north of today’s Jammu and Kashmir). This resulted in the British suggesting a mutual delimitation of the Sino-Kashmir border to the Chinese. British Colonel C.M. MacDonald addressed a letter to Prince Ch’ing and his ministers on March 14, 1889. The text of the letter included:

“It is now proposed by the Indian Government that for the sake of avoiding any dispute or uncertainty in the future a clear understanding should be come to with the Chinese Government as to the frontier between the two States. To obtain this clear understanding it is necessary that China should relinquish her shadowy claim to suzerainty over the state of Kanjut. The Indian Government on the other hand will on behalf of Kanjut relinquish her claims to most of the Tagdumbash and Raskam districts. It will not be necessary to mark out the frontier. The natural frontier is the crest of a range of mighty mountains a great part of which is quite inaccessible. It will be sufficient if the two Governments will enter into an agreement to recognize the frontier as laid down by its clearly marked geographical features.”

Although the Chinese never responded to this letter, it is of significance in that it provides the British version. And the fact that this is one of the few documented sources of delineation shows that the British found the Sino-Kashmir frontier to be of little importance, not worthy of the deliberations of imperial statesmen.

As a result, maps made by the British during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were inaccurate and contradicted each other. Even as late as 1909, the Imperial Gazetteer of India drew the border to the west of the Karakoram Pass and north of the line that India got from the British in 1947. The importance of MacDonald’s letter has been underestimated by historians. At border talks, both Chinese and Indian delegations referred to this letter and used it to further their own purposes. The Indian delegates would slightly alter the provisions of the letter, which

did not change the eastern boundary of Ladakh from being the spur running south from the Kunlun range, as indicated by earlier British maps. The Indians instead said that it was the Kunlun range itself which the British described as being the northern border. Indian representatives would state that, in the letter, the British described the northern Kashmiri border with Sinkiang as running along the Kunlun range up to a point east of 80° longitude where it meets Ladakh's eastern boundary.

The Chinese could have used the details of the letter as a weapon—the British would likely have considered the argument valid because the contents of the letter had been sanctioned—but they limited themselves to the argument that in 1899 India had proposed the boundaries between Sinkiang and Tibet, but they had not been accepted by the Chinese government.

Since then, China's case remained based on the claim that the border was never delimited and that unilateral delimitations by imperial powers would not be considered valid by national governments. For example, in the 'Sino-Indian Boundary Question', published in 1962 by the Foreign Languages Press in Peking, the letter is discussed as such: "The British Government proposed in 1899 to delimit the boundary between Ladakh and Kashmir on the one hand and Sinkiang on the other, but nothing came of it. It is also inconceivable to hold that the territory of another country can be annexed by a unilateral proposal." It is worth remembering that the line in the letter only included approximately half of Beijing's then claim in the Aksai Chin. However, their half-hearted efforts in using historical data to further their argument looked pale in comparison to India's meticulous care in preparing arguments grounded in historical data and documentation.

China seemed to be of the opinion that physical presence in the disputed areas was far more important and made a stronger case than any historical data. Tensions rose in the west when China undertook massive projects for road construction to support its presence in Tibet. One of the most important projects was the conversion of the old caravan route to Aksai Chin from Xinjiang into a motorable road. This project was begun in 1953 and was completed in September 1957. Prime Minister Nehru heard of this news, it is said, through a Chinese newspaper, and he sent two reconnaissance missions to Aksai Chin, one of which was taken into custody by Chinese patrols in the area. Nehru finally felt like he had to make a stand and sent a memo to the Chinese government, officially claiming the Aksai Chin region as Indian territory. He wrote, "There can be no question of these large parts of India [shown as within China on the Chinese map] being anything but India and there is no dispute about it."

Zhou Enlai responded to this in January 1959 with perhaps the first clear enunciation of the Chinese policy. He said that although the borders between the two countries had never been formally demarcated, there were no border disputes between India and China, as Nehru seemed to be implying. His letter also stated that the Aksai Chin was Chinese territory and had always been under the jurisdiction of China. It added that although China considered the McMahon line to be illegal, China would consider accepting the McMahon line if India waived or greatly modified its claim to the Aksai Chin.

These claims were outrightly rejected by Nehru, who felt insecure and decided to send Indian troops into all the disputed territories claimed by India. In October 1959, Indian troops tried to establish their posts near the Lanak Pass. To do so, they tried to cross the Kongka Pass, and this resulted in a military clash with the Chinese troops posted there. Nine Indians died and ten were taken prisoner, while the Chinese only lost one. Following the showdown at the Kongka Pass, Zhou Enlai decided to visit India to put an end to the dispute peacefully through negotiations. During these negotiations, Zhou proposed the reciprocal acceptance of the realities on ground of Indian or Chinese presence, and the setting up of a boundary commission to fix the borders once and for all. India, however, rejected this and said that it would accept no compromise, no negotiations, and no standstill agreement. After these failed discussions, China began to step up its military forces in the disputed zones through the setting up of check-posts and border patrols.



Middle Sector

The dispute in the middle sector is the least contentious by far. It comprises the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The length of the border between Himachal Pradesh and Tibet is approximately 300 kilometers and are in the districts of Kinnaur and Lahul. The length of the border between Uttar Pradesh and Tibet is approximately 400 kilometers and contains the famous passes of Kungri, Lipu Lekh, and Neeti. This region is important for two reasons. Uttar Pradesh is the most populous Indian state and is thus perhaps the most important, electorally speaking. It has the highest number of seats in the Indian Parliament, which allots seats based on the population of the state. This is a major battleground of Indian domestic politics.

Chinese interference would greatly affect the internal politics of the country, which is why anti-China and anti-Pakistan rhetoric abounds in this state. Moreover, this region has a number of pilgrimage routes to holy places in the Hindu religion. Although there has never been any major row over this sector, China has occasionally accused India of occupying parts of their territory and illegally expanding its territory since the 1950s, referring specifically to the Ngari prefecture of Tibet, Uttar Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh. The total disputed area is around two thousand square kilometers. This sector is the only one on which the Chinese and Indians have shared maps with each other on which they both agree. It has seen only a few minor incidents such as invasions of airspace.

Dharamshala, where the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile have been given asylum since the 1959 Tibetan uprising against the Chinese, lies in Himachal Pradesh. Their presence has been a constant strain on Sino-Indian relations.

Eastern Sector

In 1913-14, a tripartite conference was held between Sir Henry McMahon, who was at the time foreign secretary of the British Indian government, a delegate of Tibet, and a representative of the federal Chinese government, and drafted the Shimla Accord. On the sidelines of this conference, McMahon met with the Tibetan delegate and signed a bilateral agreement on a border known as the McMahon line. The Chinese government rejected this border and the Accord, and later the government of Tibet disputed it as well.

The British government, however, began to use the McMahon Line in Survey of India maps in 1937 and published the line in the Shimla Accord which was released the following year. The

British continued to push forward and expand control towards the McMahon Line, especially taking advantage of China's weakness during the Second World War. When India finally won her independence in August 1947, the McMahon Line had become very much a part of India's border in the northeast, and the new government accepted the inherited border as the legitimate border.

In 1951, the People's Republic of China took control of Tibet, bringing them even closer to India and provoking the Indian government to try to assert their control, both administrative and military, in the east. India also occupied Tawang, which was an important Buddhist site and the birthplace of the sixth Dalai Lama. The Tibetan government was furious and protested, but the Chinese government said nothing on the issue. This silence was interpreted as China's willingness to accept the legitimacy of the McMahon Line. Although there was no talk of the border dispute, both India and China had started building roads and infrastructure and sending out survey teams to the region. In 1954, India and China signed an agreement which included their 'Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence':

- Mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity
- Mutual non-aggression
- Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs
- Equality and cooperation for mutual benefit
- Peaceful coexistence

The agreement also included provisions on Tibet. India surrendered some of its rights in Tibet, and China refrained from discussing the border issue, which India perceived as a recognition of the fact that there was no border dispute. Nehru even made an announcement that he was glad that the borders had been drawn and that there should be no further disputes. He ordered the setting up of a system of checks and posts along the entire border and, after cementing their geopolitical position, India tried to modify some sections of the McMahon Line by pushing them further into China in the north.

This culminated in the first clash between the Chinese and Indian armies in 1959. In August, the Chinese army captured an Indian patrol at Longju, which they believed to be north of the McMahon Line but which India claimed laid directly on the line. In October of that year, there was a military showdown near the Kongka Pass in the Aksai Chin region in which nine Indian

police officers were killed. The Indian Army was not ready for war at the time and decided to withdraw patrols from those disputed areas.

Crisis Committee Documents

DIRECTIVES

MUN Crisis is a specialized committee of quick decisions and fast-paced action where a lot can happen quickly. Directives are what drive the story forward. Well-written and relevant directives can bring your character glory. Poorly written directives will result in defeat or even character death. The directives you write need to be plausible and consistent with your character's abilities and goals. To be most effective, you need to balance pragmatism, your long-term goals and how you see your character developing. However, if your request is within your characters assets and abilities, a successful directive boils down to how good your idea is and how well your directive is written.

DIRECTIVE NAME:(Public/Private/Cabinet)

From:

To:

Objective:

Ministries/Parties Involved:Plan of Action (Numbered List)

INTEL REQUESTS

Crisis notes are the main line of communication between the crisis room, the people who write the crisis updates, and individual delegates. Crisis notes can be simple questions regarding information about the crisis update, information regarding the resources or abilities you have, or information about some other subject. However, crisis notes are more importantly used to take actions. Unlike directives, which are passed by committees and therefore public knowledge, crisis notes are secret, unless you choose to tell another delegate about what you wrote. The success of an action formulated in a crisis note depends on how well it is written.

INTEL REQUEST

To:

Subject:

Content:

Communiqués

Communiqués are tools used to contact entities outside of your committee to involve them with the crisis in a certain way. They are written as formal correspondence to outside actors as a way of enticing them to act, even though they are not under your direct control. You can write communiques as an individual delegate or as a committee.

COMMUNIQUE

Respected (To),

Content of Communiqué

Sincerely,

(By)