



9/11

Official Study Guide



AGENDA

Addressing and analysing the International Response to the September 11, 2001 Terrorist Attacks along with severe impacts on the individual and groups involved.

Freeze Date: 08:46 EDT, September 11, 2001

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Letter from the EB

Esteemed Delegates,

It is with immense pleasure that we welcome you to the committee at JBCN OSHIWARA MUN 2026. This committee places you at one of the most consequential moments in modern history, as the world attempts to comprehend and respond to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. The events of this day would fundamentally transform international politics, national security, counterterrorism and the relationship between states across the globe.

You will enter a committee defined by uncertainty, rapidly developing information and immense political pressure. The situation facing the international community is unprecedented, and the decisions made in the immediate aftermath of the attacks may determine the course of global affairs for decades to come. Every action, alliance and response will carry significant political, diplomatic and humanitarian consequences.

As delegates, you must thoroughly understand your portfolio and the position you hold within this unfolding crisis. Your influence, responsibilities, relationships and limitations will all shape the decisions available to you. Historical research will provide an essential foundation, but the true challenge lies in applying your knowledge strategically as circumstances within the committee continue to evolve.

This committee will demand adaptability, creativity and decisive leadership. Delegates will be required to respond to incomplete information, competing interests and unexpected developments. We encourage you to think critically about the consequences of every decision and to consider not only the immediate response to terrorism, but also the long-term political and international implications of your actions.

The Executive Board encourages every delegate to research beyond the contents of this study guide and arrive prepared to participate actively. Be confident in your decisions, strategic in your diplomacy and willing to adapt when circumstances change. The strongest delegates will be those who can balance historical understanding with effective decision-making in the face of an unprecedented crisis.

History is shaped by the decisions made during moments of uncertainty. While we know the course that events took in reality, the direction of this committee will ultimately be determined by you. We are incredibly excited to see the alliances you forge, the strategies you develop and the history you create.

We wish you the very best of luck and look forward to welcoming you to committee.

With regards,

Aryan Mehta
Director

Panache Kataria
Assistant Director

Thea Paras Kanani
Assistant Director

Introduction to the Committee

The events of 11 September 2001 represented a defining moment in contemporary international history. The coordinated terrorist attacks against the United States created an immediate and unprecedented crisis, forcing governments, intelligence agencies, military institutions and international organisations to confront a rapidly changing security environment. In the aftermath, questions surrounding national security, international cooperation, terrorism and the appropriate response to such an attack became central to global politics.

This committee is designed to place delegates within the uncertainty and urgency of the immediate response. Operating from the designated freeze date, delegates will assume the roles of individuals directly connected to the unfolding crisis and will be required to respond to rapidly developing events. Unlike a traditional committee, the focus will not simply be on discussing what historically occurred, but on actively determining what should happen next.

The committee will bring together a range of individuals whose positions, responsibilities and influence vary significantly. Delegates may represent political leaders, government officials, intelligence personnel, military figures or other individuals relevant to the crisis. Each portfolio will possess different objectives, resources and limitations, making cooperation, strategic decision-making and effective communication essential.

As the committee progresses, delegates will be confronted with incomplete information, conflicting priorities and unexpected developments. Decisions may have immediate consequences while simultaneously shaping broader political and international developments. Delegates must therefore carefully consider the implications of their actions and balance the need for a decisive response with the complex realities of domestic and international affairs.

The committee encourages delegates to research their portfolios extensively and understand the historical context leading up to the freeze date. However, history should serve as a foundation rather than a limitation. Once committee begins, the actions of delegates may alter the course of events entirely. Through directives, alliances, negotiations and strategic decision-making, delegates will have the opportunity to create an alternative path forward.

Ultimately, this committee will test a delegate's ability to remain composed under pressure, adapt to changing circumstances and make difficult decisions in an environment where every action carries consequences. The question is not simply how history unfolded, but how you will choose to respond when placed at the centre of one of the most significant crises of the twenty-first century.

Introduction to the Agenda

The events of 11 September 2001 marked a profound turning point in global history. On this day, the United States faced a series of coordinated terrorist attacks that resulted in an unprecedented national and international crisis. Beyond their immediate impact, these events raised urgent questions regarding terrorism, national security, intelligence failures and the responsibilities of governments in protecting their citizens.

The agenda of this committee focuses on the immediate response to the attacks and the broader challenge posed by international terrorism. Delegates must consider how the United States and other relevant actors should respond while facing rapidly changing circumstances, limited information and immense public and political pressure. The committee will examine questions surrounding national security, intelligence coordination, emergency response, diplomacy and the potential consequences of actions taken against those believed to be responsible.

The crisis also extends far beyond the immediate events. Decisions made in response to terrorism have the potential to reshape international relations, alter security policies and influence the relationship between states for years to come. Delegates must therefore consider both the urgency of the immediate situation and the long-term consequences of their decisions.

Through this agenda, delegates will be challenged to balance security concerns with political realities and international cooperation. The objective is not merely to understand how the world historically responded, but to critically analyse the options available at the moment of crisis and determine an effective course of action. As the committee progresses, delegates will have the opportunity to influence events and potentially create an alternative course of history.

Historical Background

To understand the significance of the events of 11 September 2001 and the international response that followed, it is essential to examine the political and security developments that preceded them. The attacks did not occur in isolation. They emerged within a broader international environment shaped by geopolitical conflicts, the growth of transnational terrorist networks, and increasing concerns regarding extremist organisations operating across national borders.

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia contributed to significant political instability and created environments in which numerous armed groups and extremist organisations emerged. The Soviet-Afghan War of the 1980s was particularly significant in shaping the development of international militant networks. Foreign volunteers travelled to Afghanistan to participate in the conflict, establishing relationships and networks that would continue to exist long after the war had ended.

During the 1990s, the United States increasingly faced security threats from terrorist organisations operating internationally. Attacks against American interests abroad and previous attacks on American soil contributed to growing concerns regarding the ability of governments and intelligence agencies to identify and prevent complex terrorist operations. However, the international nature of these organisations created significant challenges, as they often operated across multiple countries and exploited weaknesses in communication and coordination between governments.

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, terrorism had become an increasingly significant international security concern. Yet the scale and nature of the attacks that occurred on 11 September 2001 shocked governments around the world and demonstrated the potential consequences of coordinated transnational terrorism. The immediate challenge was therefore not only to respond to an unprecedented crisis but also to determine who was responsible, how future attacks could be prevented and what consequences would follow from the response.

The situation at the committee's freeze date remains one of extraordinary uncertainty. Information is incomplete, communication is rapidly evolving and the full scope of the crisis has yet to be understood. The decisions made by individuals and institutions in this moment will influence not only the immediate response but potentially the future direction of international politics and security.

Timeline of Events

The origins of the crisis can be traced through several decades of geopolitical developments, regional conflicts and the emergence of transnational extremist organisations. Understanding these events is essential for delegates seeking to comprehend the circumstances that shaped the international security environment prior to 11 September 2001.

During the 1980s, the Soviet-Afghan War became a major geopolitical conflict and attracted foreign fighters from numerous countries. Networks developed during this period would later influence the growth and organisation of militant groups operating internationally. The withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in 1989 did not eliminate these networks, and the following years saw continued instability throughout the region.

During the 1990s, terrorist attacks against American interests increased concerns regarding international terrorism. Several attacks demonstrated that extremist organisations were capable of operating across national borders and coordinating complex operations. Intelligence agencies and governments faced growing difficulties in monitoring individuals and organisations whose activities extended across multiple jurisdictions.

Throughout the late 1990s, international attention increasingly focused on terrorist networks associated with Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. Attacks against United States embassies in East Africa in 1998 and the attack against the USS Cole in 2000 further demonstrated the growing threat posed by these organisations. Despite these warnings, disagreements, communication difficulties and limitations within intelligence and security institutions complicated efforts to fully assess and prevent future attacks.

On the morning of 11 September 2001, the United States faced an unprecedented terrorist crisis. Coordinated attacks rapidly transformed an ordinary day into a national emergency, prompting an immediate response from political leaders, emergency services, intelligence agencies and the military. Information regarding the attacks, those responsible and the possibility of further threats remained uncertain.

As the situation continues to develop, the United States and the wider international community face a series of urgent questions. How should the crisis be managed? Who bears responsibility? How can further attacks be prevented? And what political, military and diplomatic actions should be taken in response?

These are the questions that will define the course of this committee.

Key Actors and Stakeholders

The response to the events of 11 September 2001 involved a vast number of individuals, institutions and governments. Each possessed different responsibilities, sources of information and objectives. Understanding the roles and relationships of these actors is essential for delegates, as the effectiveness of any response depended heavily upon communication and coordination between multiple institutions.

The United States Government stood at the centre of the immediate response. The President, senior members of the administration and various government departments were responsible for maintaining national security, managing the emergency and determining the political direction of the country's response. Decisions made by the federal government would have immediate domestic consequences while also influencing the response of the international community.

The intelligence community played a crucial role in identifying potential threats and gathering information regarding those believed to be responsible. Agencies responsible for domestic and foreign intelligence possessed different jurisdictions and capabilities, making cooperation essential but often challenging. The rapidly evolving nature of the crisis placed immense pressure on intelligence officials to determine whether further threats existed and to establish responsibility.

The military and defence establishment was responsible for protecting national security and preparing for any potential external threat. In an unprecedented situation involving attacks within the United States, military leaders faced the challenge of responding to an uncertain threat while coordinating with civilian authorities and ensuring the protection of American territory and interests.

Law enforcement and emergency services were responsible for managing the immediate consequences of the attacks. Their responsibilities included protecting civilians, coordinating emergency operations, securing affected locations and investigating the events as information became available. Their actions were critical in the first stages of the crisis.

Beyond the United States, the international community closely monitored developments. Allied governments faced questions regarding their own security and their potential role in supporting an American response. Meanwhile, governments throughout the Middle East, South Asia and other strategically significant regions would be directly affected by any future political or military decisions.

The relationships between these actors were often complex. Different agencies possessed different information, governments held different political interests and individuals within the decision-making process frequently disagreed on the most appropriate course of action. Delegates must therefore understand not only their own position but also the motivations and capabilities of those around them.

The ability to communicate, cooperate and act decisively will ultimately determine how effectively the committee responds to the crisis.

List of Key Terms and Concepts

Terrorism

The use or threat of violence, particularly against civilians, to pursue political, ideological or religious objectives. The definition of terrorism has historically varied between legal systems and governments, creating difficulties in establishing universally accepted responses.

Counterterrorism

The policies, strategies and actions undertaken by governments and international organisations to prevent, investigate and respond to terrorism. Counterterrorism may involve intelligence gathering, law enforcement, diplomacy, financial measures and military action.

Transnational Terrorism

Terrorism involving individuals, organisations or activities that operate across national borders. Transnational terrorist networks present particular challenges because they can take advantage of multiple jurisdictions and international movement.

Non-State Actor

An individual, organisation or group that possesses influence in international affairs but is not an official government or sovereign state. Terrorist organisations are examples of non-state actors.

al-Qaeda

A transnational extremist organisation that emerged during the late twentieth century and became associated with attacks against the United States and other targets. Its leadership, organisational structure and international networks are central to understanding the security environment of the committee.

Osama bin Laden

The founder and leading figure associated with al-Qaeda during this period. His role, influence and stated opposition to the United States made him a major subject of international counterterrorism efforts.

Intelligence

Information gathered and analysed to support government decision-making and national security. Intelligence may be obtained through human sources, surveillance, communications and cooperation between agencies.

Intelligence Failure

A failure to collect, interpret, communicate or effectively act upon relevant information. Intelligence failures may result from organisational divisions, inaccurate assessments or inadequate cooperation between institutions.

Intelligence Sharing

The exchange of relevant information between intelligence agencies, law-enforcement institutions and governments. Effective intelligence sharing is particularly important when threats operate across multiple jurisdictions

National Security

The protection of a state, its institutions and its population from threats. National security concerns may include terrorism, foreign attacks, espionage and other threats to stability.

Homeland Security

The protection of a country's territory and population from domestic threats and emergencies. Following major terrorist incidents, governments often reconsider how responsibilities for homeland security should be organised.

Crisis Management

The process of responding to an emergency through rapid decision-making, coordination and communication. Effective crisis management requires governments to function despite uncertainty and incomplete information.

Emergency Response

The immediate actions taken by emergency services and government institutions to protect lives, manage affected areas and respond to a developing crisis.

Federal Government

The national government of the United States, responsible for matters including national security, foreign policy and defence.

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

The primary federal law-enforcement and domestic investigative agency of the United States. It plays an important role in investigating terrorism occurring within American jurisdiction.

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

A major American intelligence agency primarily responsible for collecting and analysing foreign intelligence. Its work is relevant to identifying and understanding threats originating outside the United States.

National Security Agency (NSA)

An American intelligence agency responsible for signals intelligence and information security. Its role includes gathering and analysing certain forms of communications-related intelligence.

Department of Defense

The United States government department responsible for coordinating the country's military forces and national defence.

Department of State

The United States government department responsible for conducting foreign policy and diplomatic relations with other countries.

National Security Council

A body responsible for advising the President on matters relating to national security and foreign policy. It brings together senior officials involved in major security decisions.

Air Traffic Control

The system responsible for coordinating and monitoring civilian aircraft. During an aviation-related emergency, air traffic authorities become critical sources of information and coordination.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

The American government agency responsible for regulating and overseeing civil aviation and air traffic systems.

North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD)

A joint United States and Canadian organisation responsible for aerospace warning and defence in North America.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

A military alliance involving North American and European states based on collective defence. Developments affecting one member may have significant consequences for the wider alliance.

Collective Defence

The principle that an attack against one member of an alliance may be treated as a threat to all members, potentially requiring collective action.

Article 5

The collective-defence provision of the NATO treaty. It establishes that an armed attack against one member may trigger assistance from other members.

Sovereignty

The authority of a state to govern itself and control affairs within its territory without external interference.

Jurisdiction

The legal authority of an institution or government to enforce laws or make decisions within a particular area or over particular individuals.

International Cooperation

Coordination between states and international institutions to address shared challenges. Counterterrorism often requires international cooperation because threats may cross national borders.

Diplomacy

The management of relations between states through negotiation, communication and peaceful engagement.

Sanctions

Political or economic restrictions imposed to influence the behaviour of a government, organisation or individual.

Terrorist Financing

The collection, movement or use of funds and other resources to support terrorist activity. Governments may attempt to prevent terrorism by identifying and disrupting financial networks.

Financial Intelligence

Information regarding financial transactions and activities that may assist authorities in identifying suspicious networks or illegal funding.

Radicalisation

The process through which an individual adopts increasingly extreme political, ideological or religious beliefs that may support violence.

Extremism

The holding of beliefs or political positions significantly outside mainstream views. Not all extremism involves violence, although violent extremist movements may pose serious security concerns.

Recruitment

The process through which an organisation attracts and incorporates new members or supporters.

Propaganda

Information intended to influence public opinion or promote a particular political or ideological position.

Asymmetric Warfare

Conflict in which opposing sides possess significantly different military capabilities and therefore use different strategies and methods.

Guerrilla Warfare

A form of irregular conflict involving smaller forces using unconventional tactics against a more powerful opponent.

Military Intervention

The use of armed forces by a state within another country or territory to achieve political or security objectives.

Pre-emptive Action

Action taken based on the belief that a threat may emerge in the near future. Such actions often involve significant political and legal debate.

Use of Force

The deployment of military power by a state. International law places restrictions on when and how force may be used.

Self-Defence

The principle allowing a state to protect itself against an armed attack, subject to relevant legal and international considerations.

United Nations Security Council

The United Nations body primarily responsible for addressing threats to international peace and security.

Resolution

A formal decision or statement adopted by an international organisation or governing body.

International Law

The system of legal principles and agreements governing relationships between states and other international actors.

Human Rights

Fundamental rights and freedoms recognised as belonging to all individuals. Counterterrorism measures often create debates regarding the balance between security and individual rights.

Civil Liberties

Individual freedoms protected from excessive government interference.

Surveillance

The monitoring of individuals, groups or communications for security or investigative purposes.

Communications Intelligence

Intelligence gathered from communications and signals, subject to technological and legal limitations.

Human Intelligence

Information obtained through individuals and human sources.

Threat Assessment

The process of evaluating the likelihood, nature and potential consequences of a threat.

Risk Management

The identification and reduction of potential dangers through planning and preventative measures.

Interagency Coordination

Cooperation and communication between different government departments and agencies.

Chain of Command

The structure through which authority and instructions move within a government, military or organisation.

Continuity of Government

Plans designed to ensure that government institutions can continue functioning during a major emergency.

State of Emergency

An extraordinary situation that may allow governments to implement temporary emergency measures.

Public Communication

The process through which governments and institutions provide information to the public during a crisis.

Public Panic

Widespread fear or anxiety within a population, particularly during periods of uncertainty or emergency.

Mass Casualty Incident

An event in which the number of affected individuals overwhelms or significantly challenges emergency-response capabilities.

Emergency Services

Organisations responsible for immediate public safety and emergency assistance, including police, fire and medical services.

Law Enforcement

Government institutions responsible for enforcing laws, investigating crimes and maintaining public order.

Investigation

The systematic process of collecting information and evidence to establish what occurred and identify those responsible.

Evidence

Information or material used to establish facts during an investigation or legal process.

Attribution

The process of determining responsibility for an attack, operation or other action.

Non-State Threat

A security threat originating from an organisation or individual that does not represent a recognised government.

International Security

The collective security and stability of states within the international system.

Collective Security

The principle that states should cooperate to respond to threats against peace and security.

Coalition

A group of states, organisations or individuals working together toward a shared objective.

Strategic Alliance

A cooperative relationship between actors created to advance shared political, military or security interests.

Geopolitics

The study of how geography, resources and political power influence international relations.

Foreign Policy

The strategies and objectives through which a government manages its relationships with other international actors.

Domestic Policy

Policies primarily focused on matters within a country's borders

Crisis Directive

A written instruction produced by delegates in a crisis committee proposing specific actions or strategies.

Communiqué

An official written communication issued by a government, organisation or committee to announce information, decisions or positions.

Freeze Date

The specific point in history at which the committee begins. Delegates should understand historical developments up to this moment but must treat future events as uncertain unless introduced through the committee.

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Historical Crisis Committee

A committee format in which delegates are placed at a particular historical moment and are able to influence the direction of future events.

Portfolio

The individual person, position or role represented by a delegate within a committee.

Character Arc

The potential development of a portfolio's position, influence or actions throughout the progression of a crisis committee.

Committee Dynamics

The relationships, conflicts, alliances and interactions that develop between delegates during committee.

Bloc

A group of delegates who cooperate because of shared interests, objectives or strategies.

Backchannel

A private method of communication used between individuals or groups outside formal public debate.

Directive

A written document outlining specific actions that a delegate or group intends to take.

Crisis Update

New information introduced during committee that changes or develops the existing situation.

Historical Divergence

The point at which the actions of delegates cause the committee to depart from recorded history.

Alternative History

A potential historical outcome created when events develop differently from what occurred in reality.

Fog of War

The uncertainty experienced by decision-makers during a rapidly developing crisis due to incomplete or inaccurate information

Escalation

An increase in the intensity, scale or seriousness of a conflict or crisis.

De-escalation

Actions intended to reduce tension, prevent further conflict and stabilise a developing situation.

Deterrence

The attempt to prevent an actor from taking a particular action by creating the expectation of consequences.

Retaliation

A response taken against an actor following an attack or hostile action.

Strategic Decision-Making

The process of making long-term decisions while considering objectives, available resources and potential consequences.

International Relations

The study and practice of relationships between states, international organisations and other global actors.

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Detailed Timeline of Events

Year	Event	Relevance
1979	The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan	In December 1979, the Soviet Union intervened militarily in Afghanistan to support the Afghan government against armed opposition groups. The conflict quickly became an important theatre of the Cold War. Various Afghan resistance groups received support from foreign governments, while volunteers from different parts of the world travelled to the region. The networks and relationships developed during this period would later influence the development of transnational militant organisations.
1980s	Development of International Militant Networks	Throughout the Soviet-Afghan War, foreign volunteers travelled to Afghanistan and neighbouring Pakistan. Organisations and networks were established to support these volunteers and coordinate their movement and activities. Although many individuals later returned to their countries of origin, the relationships developed during the conflict continued to exist.

Year	Event	Relevance
1988	Formation of al-Qaeda	During the final years of the Soviet-Afghan War, Osama bin Laden and several associates developed what would become al-Qaeda. The organisation sought to establish an international network capable of advancing its ideological objectives beyond Afghanistan. Its development marked an important shift towards more organised transnational extremist activity.
February 1989	Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan	The Soviet Union completed its military withdrawal from Afghanistan. However, the conflict within Afghanistan continued, and the region remained politically unstable. The end of the war also left many foreign fighters connected through networks that would later become involved in conflicts and extremist movements elsewhere.
1990–1991	The Gulf War and Growing Tensions	Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent international military response created significant political tensions across the Middle East. The deployment of American forces to Saudi Arabia became a major source of opposition for Osama bin Laden and other extremist figures, contributing to increasingly hostile rhetoric against the United States.

Year	Event	Relevance
1993	Attack on the World Trade Center	A terrorist attack targeted the World Trade Center in New York City, demonstrating that internationally connected extremist networks could conduct attacks within the United States. The incident intensified concerns regarding domestic security and international terrorism.
Mid-1990s	Expansion of al-Qaeda	Throughout the mid-1990s, al-Qaeda expanded its influence and developed relationships with individuals and groups operating in several countries. Osama bin Laden relocated to Afghanistan, where the organisation benefited from a more secure environment in which to operate.
1996	Taliban Control of Kabul	The Taliban captured Kabul and established control over significant parts of Afghanistan. The relationship between the Taliban and al-Qaeda became increasingly significant, as Afghanistan provided an environment in which al-Qaeda's leadership and associated networks could operate.
1998	United States Embassy Attacks in East Africa	Coordinated attacks against United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania resulted in significant casualties and increased international attention on al-Qaeda. The attacks demonstrated the organisation's ability to coordinate operations across borders.

Year	Event	Relevance
1998	United States Responds with Missile Strikes	Following the embassy attacks, the United States launched missile strikes against locations in Afghanistan and Sudan believed to be connected to terrorist activity. The strikes did not eliminate al-Qaeda's leadership or organisational capacity, and concerns regarding future attacks continued.
December 1999	Millennium Plot Disrupted	Security authorities disrupted an attempted terrorist operation connected to the planned crossing of the United States-Canada border. The incident reinforced concerns that terrorist networks continued to consider attacks against American targets.
October 2000	Attack Against the USS Cole	A terrorist attack targeted the USS Cole while it was in the Yemeni port of Aden. The attack resulted in the deaths of American military personnel and further increased concerns regarding al-Qaeda's operational capabilities.
Early 2001	Increasing Intelligence Concerns	Throughout the first half of 2001, intelligence agencies received increasing indications regarding the possibility of significant terrorist activity. However, intelligence was often fragmented, incomplete or distributed across different agencies. Difficulties in sharing and interpreting information contributed to uncertainty regarding the precise nature, location and timing of potential threats.

Year	Event	Relevance
Summer 2001	Heightened Warnings	During the summer of 2001, concerns regarding possible terrorist activity continued to increase. American officials received warnings suggesting that al-Qaeda intended to carry out significant operations. Despite the seriousness of these warnings, authorities lacked sufficient specific information to identify the exact nature or timing of a potential attack.
6 August 2001	Presidential Daily Briefing	President George W. Bush received a Presidential Daily Brief concerning potential threats associated with al-Qaeda. The briefing contributed to growing awareness within parts of the American government regarding the possibility of terrorist activity.
11 September 2001	A Morning of Uncertainty	On the morning of 11 September 2001, events began to unfold rapidly. Information reaching government agencies and decision-makers was incomplete and often contradictory. Authorities were initially uncertain about the nature and scale of the developing emergency.

8:46 AM EDT on 11th September, 2001 – Committee Freeze Date

At 8:46 AM Eastern Daylight Time, the committee enters its historical timeline. At this moment, a major crisis has begun to unfold, but the full scope of the situation remains unknown. Decision-makers do not possess knowledge of events that have not yet occurred, and delegates must operate solely using information that would realistically be available at the freeze date. From this point forward, history is no longer predetermined.

The actions of delegates, the decisions they make and the information introduced through the crisis will determine how events develop. Historical outcomes should not be assumed to occur automatically. Delegates must respond to the evolving situation based on their portfolios, available information and strategic objectives.

Country/Portfolio Positions

The September 11 attacks created an unprecedented international crisis that affected governments, intelligence agencies, military institutions, terrorist organizations, and political leaders across the world. Unlike a traditional committee in which delegates represent countries alone, this committee includes individuals whose decisions, influence, intelligence, and actions directly shape the course of events. Every portfolio therefore enters the committee with its own priorities, available resources, limitations, and objectives.

The United States Government

The United States is the central actor in the crisis. Following the attacks, the immediate priorities of the American government are establishing the scale of the attacks, identifying those responsible, preventing further attacks, protecting the civilian population, and determining an appropriate national response. However, the American leadership must make decisions under extreme uncertainty. Information is incomplete, intelligence agencies may disagree, and the possibility of further attacks cannot immediately be ruled out.

Different branches of the American government may also have competing priorities. The President must provide national leadership and make strategic decisions, while the military focuses on defence and possible operations. Intelligence agencies seek to identify the perpetrators and uncover additional threats. Law-enforcement institutions investigate the attacks and pursue individuals involved in the plot. Political leaders must therefore balance security, public confidence, military action, intelligence gathering, and international diplomacy.

The Intelligence Community

American intelligence agencies hold a critical position within the crisis. Their primary objective is to collect, analyse, and distribute information concerning potential threats and terrorist networks. However, intelligence is rarely complete or perfectly reliable. Agencies may possess fragments of information without understanding their full significance until after an event has occurred.

The intelligence community must therefore determine whether additional attacks are being planned, identify connections between suspected terrorist organizations and the September 11 attacks, and establish the locations and capabilities of those responsible. Delegates representing intelligence portfolios must consider the consequences of sharing information, protecting confidential sources, and acting upon intelligence that may later prove inaccurate.

The Military Establishment

The United States military possesses significant capabilities, but military power does not automatically provide a simple solution to terrorism. A conventional military response against a terrorist organization presents serious challenges, particularly when that organization operates across borders or within the territory of another state.

Military portfolios must consider questions regarding national defence, potential overseas operations, special operations, air power, cooperation with allied forces, and the risks of civilian casualties or political instability. Any major military response may also have consequences that extend far beyond the immediate crisis, potentially reshaping international relations and regional stability.

Law Enforcement and Domestic Security

Law-enforcement agencies play a central role in investigating the attacks and preventing further violence within the United States. Their responsibilities include identifying individuals connected to terrorist networks, analysing evidence, investigating financial connections, and coordinating with intelligence institutions.

A major challenge involves balancing effective security measures with legal protections and civil liberties. Governments facing terrorist threats may introduce extraordinary security policies, but delegates must consider whether such actions are proportionate, lawful, and sustainable. Domestic security measures can strengthen national protection while simultaneously creating political and social consequences.

International Governments and Allies

The attacks have implications far beyond the United States. Allied governments must decide how strongly to support the American response and whether the attacks should be treated as an assault on the wider international community. Many governments may offer intelligence cooperation, military assistance, diplomatic support, or access to strategic facilities.

However, international cooperation is not always straightforward. Different states have different interests, regional concerns, and relationships with the United States. Some governments may support action against terrorist organizations while opposing a large-scale military intervention. Others may be concerned that instability could spread across their regions.

Governments in the Middle East and South Asia

The political situation in the Middle East and South Asia is particularly significant. Terrorist organizations operate within complex regional environments involving governments, armed groups, religious movements, political conflicts, and international powers.

States in the region may face immense pressure to cooperate with the United States while also managing domestic political consequences. Cooperation with an American-led counterterrorism campaign may create internal instability or opposition. At the same time, refusing cooperation may result in diplomatic isolation or international pressure. Delegates representing regional governments must therefore balance national security, international relationships, domestic stability, and regional interests.

Terrorist Organizations

Terrorist organizations represent a fundamentally different type of actor within the committee. Rather than possessing the conventional institutions of a state, they may operate through decentralized networks, ideological connections, financial systems, training structures, and covert communication.

Their objectives may include political influence, ideological expansion, destabilization, retaliation, or provoking powerful states into actions that create further instability. Terrorist portfolios must understand that their strategies often depend upon secrecy, unpredictability, and the ability to operate across borders.

However, these organizations also possess weaknesses. Their communications can be intercepted, their financial networks can be disrupted, their members can be identified, and their support structures can be targeted.

The International Community

International organizations and foreign governments may play an important role in shaping the response to the attacks. The international community must confront a central question: how can terrorism be defeated without creating further instability, violating international law, or damaging international cooperation?

Different actors may advocate military intervention, diplomatic cooperation, intelligence sharing, financial restrictions, or international legal action. The effectiveness of any response will depend heavily on coordination between states and institutions.

Ultimately, the September 11 crisis is not simply a conflict between the United States and a terrorist organization. It is a global crisis involving intelligence failures, political decision-making, international law, military strategy, diplomacy, and the security of millions of people.

Portfolio Strategy

Delegates should not approach their portfolios as though every actor possesses the same information or authority. Each portfolio has specific strengths and limitations. A President may authorize major decisions but depend upon intelligence provided by others. An intelligence official may possess critical information but lack direct political authority. A military commander may possess enormous operational capabilities while requiring political authorization before acting.

Delegates must therefore remain realistic. The most successful delegates will understand what their portfolio knows, controls, wants, and fears.

A strong delegate should continuously ask:

What information does my portfolio possess?

What resources can my portfolio realistically access?

Who does my portfolio trust?

What are my portfolio's immediate priorities?

What political or institutional limitations restrict my actions?

How can my portfolio influence the wider direction of the crisis?

Understanding these questions will be essential as the committee moves beyond the initial attacks and begins confronting the rapidly developing global consequences of September 11

Failures of Previous International Counterterrorism Efforts

The September 11 attacks did not occur in a world that was unaware of terrorism. By 2001, governments, intelligence agencies, militaries, and international organizations had already spent decades confronting terrorist organizations and politically motivated violence. Numerous attacks around the world had demonstrated the ability of non-state actors to challenge governments, destabilize regions, and cause international crises. Despite this experience, however, international counterterrorism efforts remained fragmented, inconsistent, and often ineffective.

One of the greatest failures was the lack of genuine international coordination. Terrorist organizations were not restricted by national borders, yet intelligence agencies and law-enforcement institutions largely operated within them. Information collected by one government was not always shared with another, and even agencies within the same country could struggle to communicate effectively. This created significant gaps in intelligence. Important pieces of information could exist across multiple institutions without being combined into a complete understanding of a potential threat.

Another major weakness was the failure to treat terrorism as a truly global security challenge. During much of the twentieth century, governments frequently focused on terrorism as a domestic or regional problem. A terrorist organization operating in one country might not receive serious attention from governments elsewhere unless it directly threatened their interests. This allowed certain networks to establish international connections involving recruitment, funding, training, transportation, and communication.

The distinction between intelligence collection and law enforcement also created serious difficulties. Intelligence agencies were primarily concerned with gathering information about threats, while law-enforcement agencies focused on collecting evidence that could support arrests and prosecutions. These institutions often operated under different rules, priorities, and legal frameworks. Information that might have been useful to one organization could remain inaccessible or underutilized by another.

International law presented additional complications. Governments disagreed over how terrorism should be defined and how suspected terrorists should be treated. While many states condemned terrorism in principle, they did not always agree on which groups should be considered terrorist organizations. Political alliances and regional interests frequently influenced these decisions. Some governments supported armed groups that others considered dangerous terrorist movements.

The issue of state support or tolerance further complicated counterterrorism efforts. Terrorist organizations could benefit from safe locations, weak governance, financial networks, sympathetic individuals, or indirect support from powerful actors. International institutions often struggled to respond effectively when governments were unwilling or unable to eliminate terrorist activity within their territory.

Financial networks also represented a major weakness. Terrorist organizations did not require traditional armies to operate. They could depend upon relatively small financial transfers, informal networks, charitable organizations, businesses, or other systems that were difficult to monitor. Before September 11, international financial counterterrorism systems were significantly less coordinated than they would later become.

Another failure involved the underestimation of certain terrorist organizations. Governments often focused their greatest attention on threats that appeared immediate, conventional, or politically significant. Long-term terrorist planning could therefore receive insufficient attention. Organizations capable of operating across multiple countries were sometimes viewed as regional problems rather than potential global threats.

Previous military responses to terrorism had also produced mixed results. Military force could destroy infrastructure, capture individuals, or disrupt organizations, but it could not automatically eliminate the political and ideological conditions that allowed extremist movements to recruit supporters. In some cases, military action created additional instability, resentment, or opportunities for terrorist organizations to strengthen their narratives.

The attacks of September 11 therefore exposed a fundamental problem within the international security system: governments possessed enormous military and intelligence capabilities, but these capabilities were not always effectively connected. Information could exist without being properly analysed. Threats could be identified without being prioritized. Governments could agree that terrorism was dangerous without agreeing upon a coordinated strategy to confront it.

Lessons for the Committee

As delegates enter this committee, they must recognize that previous counterterrorism failures provide important lessons. The challenge is not simply to respond with greater force. The committee must determine how governments and institutions can communicate more effectively, identify threats earlier, coordinate across borders, and respond without creating additional instability.

Delegates should consider whether stronger intelligence sharing can prevent future attacks. They must debate how financial networks should be monitored and disrupted while remaining within legal frameworks. They must also consider the role of military force and whether it can effectively eliminate terrorist organizations or merely disrupt them temporarily.

The committee must additionally confront difficult questions surrounding sovereignty. What happens when a terrorist organization operates from within another state's territory? Does the threatened country have the right to act independently? What responsibility does the host government possess? How should the international community respond when a state cannot or will not eliminate terrorist networks?

The failures before September 11 demonstrate that counterterrorism requires more than a single institution, military operation, or international agreement. It requires coordination between intelligence agencies, governments, law-enforcement institutions, financial organizations, and international partners.

The decisions made within this committee will determine whether the international response learns from these previous failures—or repeats them.

Rule and Guidelines

This committee is designed to simulate the rapidly evolving political, military, intelligence, and diplomatic environment surrounding the events of September 11, 2001. Due to the nature of the committee, delegates must understand that traditional Model United Nations procedure will operate alongside crisis-specific mechanisms. Debate will therefore be faster, more unpredictable, and significantly more dynamic than in a conventional committee.

Delegates are expected to remain in character throughout the duration of the committee. Every action, speech, directive, and decision should reflect the interests, authority, knowledge, and limitations of the portfolio they represent. Delegates should not act with information that their portfolio could not realistically possess unless that information has been introduced into committee through an appropriate crisis update, intelligence report, directive, or other official mechanism.

Decorum and Conduct

All delegates are expected to maintain professionalism and respect throughout the committee. Disagreement and intense political debate are expected, particularly given the nature of the agenda, but personal attacks, discriminatory remarks, or behaviour intended to disrupt the committee will not be tolerated.

Delegates should remember that this committee addresses a real historical tragedy. The topic must therefore be approached with maturity and sensitivity. The purpose of the simulation is to analyse political, diplomatic, military, intelligence, and counterterrorism decision-making not to glorify or sensationalize acts of terrorism.

Speeches and Debate

The committee may use a variety of speaking formats depending on the situation and decisions of the Executive Board. These may include formal speeches, moderated caucuses, unmoderated caucuses, emergency discussions, and other crisis-specific forms of debate.

Delegates are expected to make speeches relevant to the immediate situation. Generic prepared speeches will have limited value in a rapidly changing crisis committee. Strong delegates should constantly adapt their arguments to new developments and respond directly to the actions of other portfolios.

The Executive Board may introduce developments that significantly alter the direction of debate. Delegates should be prepared to change their strategies when new information emerges.

Moderated Caucuses

Moderated caucuses allow delegates to discuss specific aspects of the crisis under the direction of the Chair. These discussions may focus on immediate responses, intelligence developments, military considerations, diplomatic negotiations, domestic security, or other urgent matters.

Delegates proposing moderated caucuses should ensure that their topics are specific and relevant. A strong motion should identify a clear issue requiring immediate discussion rather than simply repeating the committee agenda.

Unmoderated Caucuses

Unmoderated caucuses allow delegates to negotiate, form alliances, draft documents, and coordinate actions more freely. These periods are particularly important in a crisis committee because delegates may need to rapidly develop responses to changing circumstances. During unmoderated caucuses, delegates should actively communicate with relevant actors and attempt to build practical coalitions. However, alliances should remain realistic. Political disagreements, institutional rivalries, and conflicting national interests may prevent certain actors from cooperating fully.

Directives and Committee Action

Unlike traditional resolutions, crisis committees often rely on directives and other action-oriented documents. These documents communicate specific decisions that the committee wishes to implement.

A directive should clearly identify the intended objective, the actors responsible for implementation, the resources required, and the expected outcome. Vague statements of concern are generally less effective than clear and practical instructions.

Delegates should remember that a directive does not automatically guarantee success. The consequences of committee actions will be determined by the evolving crisis. Poorly planned decisions may fail, produce unexpected consequences, or create entirely new challenges.

Crisis Notes and Communication

Depending on the structure established by the Executive Board, delegates may be permitted to send crisis notes or other forms of private communication. These allow portfolios to communicate directly with the crisis staff or other relevant actors.

Private communication should remain realistic and consistent with the authority of the delegate's portfolio. A delegate representing a political leader cannot automatically command every institution in the world, just as an intelligence official cannot independently make national policy.

Delegates should also understand that private actions may have consequences. Other actors may discover information, oppose certain actions, or respond in unexpected ways.

Points and Motions

Standard parliamentary procedure will apply where appropriate. Delegates may raise points concerning procedural issues, request clarification when necessary, and make motions to structure debate.

However, delegates should avoid excessive procedural interruptions. The primary purpose of procedure is to facilitate meaningful debate rather than delay it. The Executive Board may exercise discretion in maintaining the pace and direction of the committee.

Role of the Executive Board

The Executive Board is responsible for maintaining order, guiding debate, evaluating directives, and managing the development of the crisis. Decisions made by the Executive Board regarding procedure and committee management are final.

The Executive Board may introduce crisis updates, intelligence developments, diplomatic events, political changes, or other situations that require immediate attention. Delegates should treat these developments seriously and adapt accordingly.

Historical Realism

Although the committee encourages creativity and strategic thinking, delegates should remain grounded in the historical context of September 11, 2001. The committee's freeze date establishes the point from which the simulation begins, and delegates should not assume knowledge of events that occur after that moment.

However, history after the freeze date is not predetermined within committee. The actions of delegates may significantly alter the direction of events. The objective is therefore not to recreate history exactly, but to determine how events could develop based on the decisions made within the committee.

Final Expectation

The most important rule of the committee is simple: think like your portfolio.

Do not act based solely on what you personally know from history. Consider what your character or portfolio knows at that specific moment. Consider their authority, priorities, relationships, political pressures, and available resources.

The strongest delegates will combine historical understanding with strategic thinking, adaptability, diplomacy, and decisive action.

Committee Expectations

This committee is designed to be fast-paced, unpredictable, and intellectually demanding. Delegates will not simply debate historical events; they will actively influence the direction of an unfolding crisis. Success will therefore depend upon preparation, adaptability, strategic thinking, and the ability to make effective decisions under pressure.

The Executive Board expects every delegate to arrive with a thorough understanding of their assigned portfolio. Delegates should be familiar with their portfolio's background, responsibilities, political relationships, institutional authority, and role within the events surrounding September 11, 2001. Knowing the general history of the attacks is important, but understanding how a specific individual or institution would respond is significantly more valuable.

Remain in Character

Delegates are expected to remain realistic and consistent with their portfolio throughout the committee. Every portfolio possesses different priorities and limitations. A political leader may focus on national stability and public confidence, while an intelligence official may prioritize the protection of sensitive information. A military official may focus on operational readiness, while a diplomat may prioritize international cooperation.

Delegates should not make decisions simply because they know what happened historically after the committee's freeze date. The simulation begins at a specific moment in history, and participants must respond based on the information available to them at that time.

Be Prepared to Adapt

No delegate should expect the committee to follow a predetermined path. Crisis updates may introduce unexpected developments, conflicting intelligence, political pressure, international reactions, or new security concerns. A strategy that appears effective at the beginning of the committee may become irrelevant within minutes.

Delegates are expected to react quickly and intelligently. This does not mean acting without thought. Effective crisis management requires delegates to analyse new information, identify the most urgent priorities, and determine realistic courses of action.

Prioritize Action

The committee values meaningful action. Delegates should move beyond simply identifying problems and begin proposing practical responses. Whether through speeches, directives, negotiations, or private communication, delegates should continuously consider what their portfolio can actually do.

A strong delegate does not merely state that terrorism must be defeated or that international cooperation is necessary. They explain how this can be achieved, who will be responsible, what resources will be used, and what consequences may follow.

Work With Others

Even the most powerful portfolios cannot control every aspect of the crisis alone. Delegates are expected to negotiate, communicate, and build relationships with other actors where appropriate. Effective cooperation may involve intelligence sharing, military coordination, diplomatic agreements, domestic security measures, or joint political strategies.

However, cooperation does not mean complete agreement. Delegates should understand their portfolio's interests and be willing to defend them. Disagreement, negotiation, and political competition are natural elements of crisis committees.

Use Information Strategically

Information will be one of the most valuable resources within the committee. Delegates may receive intelligence, reports, updates, rumours, or confidential information. They must decide what information to trust, what information to investigate, and what information to share. Not every piece of information will necessarily be complete or accurate. Delegates should evaluate sources carefully and consider the motives of those providing information. At the same time, delaying action until complete certainty is achieved may allow a crisis to worsen. The ability to make informed decisions despite uncertainty is a central skill that this committee will test.

Think Beyond the Immediate Crisis

While the immediate priority may be responding to the attacks and preventing further threats, delegates should also consider the long-term consequences of their decisions. Military intervention, emergency legislation, intelligence operations, and diplomatic agreements may produce effects that continue long after the immediate crisis has passed. Delegates should therefore ask whether their proposed actions are not only effective in the short term but also sustainable politically, legally, and strategically.

Creativity Within Realism

Delegates are encouraged to be creative and ambitious. Crisis committees reward innovative solutions and unexpected strategies. However, creativity must remain grounded in realism.

A delegate cannot simply claim access to unlimited resources, command institutions outside their authority, or achieve immediate success without considering practical limitations. The strongest ideas are those that are both imaginative and realistically achievable.

Engage With the Committee

Delegates are expected to participate actively throughout the session. This includes delivering speeches, contributing to discussion, negotiating during informal debate, responding to crisis developments, and participating in the drafting of directives.

Simply observing the committee will significantly limit a delegate's ability to influence the crisis. Delegates should take initiative, communicate their ideas, and remain aware of developments occurring across the committee.

The Standard of Excellence

The Executive Board is not searching for delegates who simply speak the most frequently. It is searching for delegates who think strategically, act realistically, communicate effectively, and demonstrate a clear understanding of their portfolio.

The strongest delegates will be able to balance confidence with cooperation, speed with careful judgement, and ambition with realism. They will understand when to lead, when to negotiate, when to gather more information, and when decisive action is necessary.

Above all, delegates should remember that this committee rewards strategy over memorization, action over repetition, and adaptability over rigid preparation.

The events of the committee will not be determined solely by history.

They will be determined by the decisions made within the room.

Counterterrorism Doctrine and Methods

Counterterrorism refers to the policies, institutions, and actions used by governments and international actors to prevent, investigate, disrupt, and respond to terrorist violence. By September 2001, however, there was no single universal counterterrorism doctrine accepted by every country. Different governments approached terrorism according to their own security concerns, political systems, legal frameworks, and historical experiences. The events of September 11 forced governments around the world to reconsider whether existing counterterrorism strategies were sufficient. Terrorist organizations had demonstrated that relatively small, highly organized groups could create consequences of international significance. This raised a fundamental question for governments: how should a state respond to an enemy that does not operate like a conventional army or represent a conventional country?

Intelligence-Led Counterterrorism

One of the most important methods of counterterrorism involves intelligence collection and analysis. Governments attempt to identify potential threats before they can develop into attacks. This may involve gathering information about terrorist networks, leadership structures, communication patterns, financing, recruitment, and movement across borders. However, intelligence-led counterterrorism depends heavily on cooperation and effective analysis. Information is only valuable when it reaches the appropriate decision-makers and is correctly interpreted. A government may possess numerous pieces of intelligence without recognizing their wider significance.

The September 11 attacks demonstrated the dangers of fragmented intelligence. Agencies may collect information independently while failing to combine it into a complete understanding of an emerging threat. Improving communication between institutions therefore becomes one of the most important counterterrorism priorities.

Law Enforcement and Investigation

Law-enforcement institutions play a critical role in identifying and prosecuting individuals connected to terrorist activity. Investigators may examine communications, financial activity, travel records, and other evidence in order to understand networks and prevent further violence.

Unlike military institutions, law enforcement generally operates within established legal frameworks and judicial systems. This can create challenges when dealing with international terrorist networks that operate across multiple jurisdictions.

Successful international investigations often require cooperation between governments. Evidence may be located in different countries, suspects may move across borders, and legal systems may have different requirements regarding arrest, extradition, and prosecution.

International Intelligence Cooperation

Terrorist networks can operate across national boundaries. As a result, individual governments may struggle to develop a complete understanding of a threat without assistance from foreign intelligence services.

Intelligence cooperation may include sharing information, coordinating investigations, identifying suspected networks, and monitoring international developments. However, intelligence sharing is complicated by concerns regarding national security and trust. Governments may hesitate to reveal sensitive information if doing so could expose confidential sources or methods.

Delegates must therefore consider how intelligence can be shared effectively while protecting essential national interests.

Financial Counterterrorism

Terrorist organizations require resources to maintain their networks. Financial counterterrorism focuses on identifying and disrupting the economic systems that support terrorist activity. Governments may investigate suspicious financial activity, restrict access to certain assets, increase international cooperation between financial institutions, and develop systems for tracking funds connected to terrorist organizations.

However, financial counterterrorism presents significant challenges. International financial systems are vast, and legitimate transactions can occur alongside illegal activity. Governments must therefore balance effective investigation with legal protections and the functioning of the wider economy.

Military Responses

Military force has historically been used against terrorist organizations when governments determine that law enforcement and intelligence operations alone are insufficient. Military responses may involve protecting national territory, targeting organizational infrastructure, supporting allied governments, or conducting operations against identified threats.

However, military action against terrorism presents major strategic and political challenges. Terrorist organizations may not possess clearly defined territory or conventional military forces. They may operate within civilian populations or across multiple countries.

Military action can therefore produce unintended consequences. An operation intended to eliminate a terrorist threat may create political instability, increase regional tensions, or damage international relationship. Delegates must carefully consider whether military action is appropriate, proportionate, and strategically effective.

Domestic Security Measures

Governments may strengthen domestic security following a major terrorist attack. Such measures can include increased coordination between security institutions, enhanced protection of important infrastructure, improved emergency preparedness, and stronger systems for identifying potential threats.

However, domestic security measures raise important questions regarding civil liberties and individual rights. Governments must determine how far they are willing to expand state powers in the name of national security.

A central challenge of counterterrorism is ensuring that efforts to protect society do not unnecessarily undermine the freedoms and legal principles that governments seek to defend.

Diplomatic Counterterrorism

Diplomacy is another important element of counterterrorism. Governments may use diplomatic pressure to encourage cooperation against terrorist organizations, build international coalitions, restrict support networks, and coordinate responses.

Diplomatic efforts can also address the political conditions that allow terrorist organizations to operate. Weak governments, regional instability, unresolved conflicts, and international tensions may create environments in which extremist organizations can expand.

A successful counterterrorism strategy may therefore require more than immediate security measures. It may require long-term diplomatic engagement and international cooperation.

Prevention and Long-Term Strategy

Preventing terrorism requires governments to think beyond immediate responses. Terrorist organizations can be disrupted through arrests or military operations, but long-term security may depend upon preventing networks from rebuilding.

Governments may focus on strengthening institutions, improving international cooperation, countering recruitment, and addressing conditions that contribute to political instability.

There is no single method capable of eliminating terrorism completely. Effective counterterrorism requires a combination of intelligence, law enforcement, diplomacy, financial action, security policy, and, where necessary and lawful, military action.

The Central Dilemma

The committee must ultimately confront one of the most difficult questions in international security:

How can governments respond decisively to terrorism without allowing fear to destroy the principles they are attempting to protect?

An effective response must protect civilians and prevent further attacks. At the same time, it must remain strategically sustainable and aware of the long-term consequences of every decision.

The challenge before the committee is therefore not merely to respond with strength.

It is to determine what kind of strength will actually create lasting security.

Intelligence Agencies and Their Relevance

Intelligence agencies occupy one of the most important positions within the September 11 crisis. Their purpose is to collect information, analyse potential threats, identify hostile actors, and provide decision-makers with assessments that can guide national security policy. However, intelligence is rarely perfect. Agencies operate with incomplete information, conflicting reports, institutional limitations, and the constant challenge of determining which threats require immediate attention.

The events surrounding September 11 demonstrated both the importance and the limitations of intelligence institutions. Information concerning terrorist networks may exist across different agencies, countries, and departments without being successfully combined into a complete understanding of an imminent threat. For this reason, intelligence cooperation and communication are central themes within the committee.

Central Intelligence Agency

The Central Intelligence Agency is responsible primarily for gathering and analysing foreign intelligence relevant to American national security. Its role includes understanding foreign governments, armed groups, terrorist organizations, and international developments that may threaten the interests of the United States.

Within the context of the committee, the CIA is particularly relevant because terrorist networks operate internationally. Understanding the leadership, structure, location, and international connections of such organizations requires extensive foreign intelligence capabilities.

The CIA may provide crucial assessments to American political leadership. However, intelligence assessments are not the same as guaranteed predictions. Decision-makers must interpret intelligence, determine its reliability, and decide what action should be taken.

Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Federal Bureau of Investigation plays a central role in domestic law enforcement and counterterrorism investigations within the United States. Its responsibilities include investigating suspected criminal activity, identifying individuals connected to terrorist networks, and collecting evidence.

The FBI's role becomes particularly significant when international terrorist threats develop connections within American territory. The Bureau may possess information relevant to potential threats while also facing legal and institutional limitations regarding how information is collected and shared. The relationship between domestic law enforcement and foreign intelligence is therefore critical. Effective counterterrorism requires coordination between institutions with different responsibilities.

National Security Agency

The National Security Agency is responsible for signals intelligence and information security. Its relevance lies in the collection and analysis of communications and other signals that may provide information about foreign threats.

Signals intelligence can assist governments in identifying networks, understanding international communications, and monitoring developments involving potential security threats. However, collecting information does not automatically mean that its significance is immediately understood.

The NSA therefore represents an important part of the broader intelligence system, particularly when information must be analysed alongside reports gathered through other methods.

Department of State Intelligence

The United States Department of State also contributes to the broader intelligence and national security system. Diplomatic reporting provides information about political developments, foreign governments, regional instability, and international reactions.

Diplomats may possess a different understanding of a crisis than military or intelligence institutions. Their perspective is particularly valuable when governments must consider the international consequences of potential actions.

Foreign Intelligence Services

The United States does not operate in isolation. Foreign intelligence services may possess information that American agencies do not. Governments with experience monitoring regional conflicts, extremist organizations, or specific terrorist networks can provide valuable intelligence.

International intelligence cooperation, however, depends upon trust. Governments may hesitate to share highly sensitive information, particularly if they fear that sources or methods could be exposed.

The committee must therefore consider how intelligence relationships can be strengthened while protecting national security interests.

Intelligence Failures and Coordination

A major theme of the September 11 crisis is the difficulty of transforming information into effective action. Intelligence failures do not necessarily occur because information is completely absent. They can occur because information is fragmented, misunderstood, ignored, or not shared with the appropriate institutions.

Different agencies may also possess competing priorities. Institutional rivalry can limit cooperation, while legal restrictions can prevent information from moving freely between organizations.

Delegates must therefore examine whether stronger coordination can improve national security. However, increased intelligence powers and information sharing may also raise concerns regarding oversight, privacy, and accountability

Relevance to the Committee

Intelligence will be one of the most valuable resources available throughout the crisis. Delegates may receive information that is incomplete, confidential, or conflicting. They must determine what to believe, what to investigate further, and what action should be taken.

The committee must understand that intelligence provides possibilities—not absolute certainty. Leaders will often be required to make decisions before every question has been answered.

The effectiveness of the response to the September 11 crisis may therefore depend not only on what intelligence agencies know, but on how effectively institutions communicate, analyse information, and transform knowledge into action.

Questions a Resolution Must Answer

A successful resolution in this committee must answer the fundamental question of how the international community should respond to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 while preventing further attacks and maintaining international stability. Delegates must clearly identify the immediate threat, determine which actors bear responsibility, and establish what evidence or intelligence supports these conclusions.

The resolution must address what actions should be taken against terrorist organizations and their networks. This includes questions surrounding intelligence sharing, financial networks, recruitment, training facilities, international movement, and cooperation between national governments. Delegates should consider how states can coordinate their efforts without creating unnecessary conflicts or undermining their own security.

Delegates must also answer what role military action should play. Is military intervention necessary, and if so, under what legal and political justification? Who should participate, what should the objectives be, and how can escalation be prevented? A resolution must consider both immediate military responses and their potential long-term consequences.

Another essential question concerns Afghanistan and the Taliban government. What responsibility does the Taliban hold for providing sanctuary to terrorist organizations operating within its territory? Should the international community issue demands, impose sanctions, negotiate, or pursue other measures? Delegates must determine how pressure can be applied while considering the humanitarian and political consequences for the wider population.

A strong resolution must further address international law and state sovereignty. What authority does the international community possess to act against terrorism across borders? Under what circumstances can a state act in self-defence? How should the committee balance the urgency of preventing further attacks with the principles of sovereignty and international law?

Finally, the resolution must look beyond the immediate crisis. How can future terrorist attacks be prevented? Delegates should propose measures concerning intelligence cooperation, border security, aviation security, counterterrorism financing, international diplomacy, and the disruption of terrorist networks. The strongest resolutions will not simply respond to 9/11—they will create a realistic and coordinated strategy for preventing the next global terrorist crisis.

Conclusion

The attacks of 11 September 2001 represent a defining moment in modern international relations. They forced governments across the world to confront questions that had previously remained unresolved: How should the international community respond when terrorism threatens global security? How can states defend their citizens while respecting international law and national sovereignty? And how far should the pursuit of security extend before it creates new political, humanitarian, or diplomatic consequences?

This committee places delegates at a moment when the future remains uncertain. The world has witnessed an unprecedented terrorist attack, information is still developing, and governments are under immense pressure to respond. Decisions made within this committee may determine the future of Afghanistan, the direction of international counterterrorism policy, relationships between major powers, and the security of millions of people around the world.

Delegates must therefore think beyond simple military retaliation. Effective counterterrorism requires intelligence cooperation, diplomacy, international coordination, financial disruption, security reforms, and carefully considered political action. At the same time, delegates must recognise that every decision carries consequences. A successful response must be effective enough to confront the immediate threat while remaining conscious of long-term stability and international cooperation.

There is no predetermined path forward. Delegates are expected to analyse the information available, represent the interests and perspectives of their assigned portfolios, form alliances, negotiate under pressure, and adapt to rapidly developing circumstances. The actions taken in committee will shape the course of the crisis.

Ultimately, the central challenge before this committee is not merely to respond to an attack. It is to answer a far greater question: how should the international community confront terrorism in a world that has suddenly changed forever? The decisions begin now.

Sources to Use

THE RIGHT SOURCES:

Any official UN websites, articles, libraries or research papers

UN Ratified Sources:- Britannica, Amnesty International, Al Jazeera, Reuters, BBC, Associated Press (AP), Human Rights Watch, etc.

Government Websites (of your respective country)

Websites ending with '.org' that report factual information

NGO websites (located in your country)

These sources provide reliable and well-researched information that will assist you to prepare in-depth country portfolios. Official UN sources are the most credible, as they offer accurate information and provide valuable insight into international policies, frameworks and country positions relevant to the agenda.

THE WRONG SOURCES:

Wikipedia, Quora and other public discussion forums

Unverified social media posts (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, X, Facebook, etc.)

Personal blogs and entertainment-focused websites (e.g., BuzzFeed, Quora, Reddit)

Websites containing vested interests in the issue being discussed, particularly those promoting a product, service, ideology or political viewpoint

Opinion pieces (Op-Eds) and AI chatbots (e.g., ChatGPT, Grok, Gemini, DeepSeek, etc.) as primary sources of information

The above sources should be avoided as they may contain inaccurate, biased, outdated, unverified or opinion-based information. Many of these sources are not subject to rigorous fact-checking and may prioritize engagement, personal viewpoints or specific interests over objectivity and accuracy.

Preambulatory and Operative Clauses

Preambulatory clauses:

Acknowledging Affirming Alarmed by Approving Aware of Believing Bearing in mind Confident Congratulating Contemplating Convinced Declaring Deeply concerned Deeply conscious Deeply convinced Deeply disturbed Deeply regretting Deploing Desiring Emphasizing Expecting Expressing its appreciation Expressing its satisfaction	Fulfilling Fully alarmed Fulfilling Fully alarmed Fully aware Fully believing Further deploring Further recalling Guided by Having adopted Having considered Having considered further Having devoted attention Having examined Having heard Having received Having studied Keeping in mind Noting further.	Taking note Viewing with appreciation Welcoming Noting with appreciation Noting with approval Noting with deep concern Noting with regret Noting with satisfaction Observing Pointing out Reaffirming Realizing Recalling Recognizing Referring Reminding Seeking Taking into account Taking into consideration
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Preambulatory and Operative Clauses

Operative clauses:

Accepts	Designates	Recommends
Affirms	Encourages	Regrets
Approves	Endorses	Requests
Appreciates	Expresses its hope	Resolves
Asks	Further invites	Seeks
Authorizes	Further proclaims	Strongly affirms
Calls for	Further recommends	Strongly condemns
Calls upon	Further requests	Strongly urges
Condemns	Further resolves	Suggests
Congratulates	Hopes	Trusts
Confirms	Proclaims	Transmits
Deplores	Proposes	Urges