

# LIMUN

LICEO'S MODEL UNITED NATIONS

## NATO



*Topic B: "Fear of irrelevance".*

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### I. COMMITTEE BACKGROUND

What is NATO?

NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) is the alliance of 30 European and North American countries. This alliance was formed in 1949, signed in the Washington Treaty. One of the key articles states that if one of the countries in NATO is attacked, it's considered a direct attack against all members of the organization, thus all members of this organization will respond with armed forces, if it's necessary.

What does being part of NATO imply?

Although these countries are willing to defend themselves as a whole with armed forces, if necessary, one of their main aims is to maintain peace in all countries. Evidently peace comes along with a few requirements, which are the following: each country having their own territorial integrity followed, political independence, and security to all 30 members. For these reasons, the countries that set up NATO are looking forward to having more countries on their side and evicting enemies, having already countries from several parts of the world, such as countries in the Euro-Atlantic area, the Mediterranean, and the Gulf region.

### Why was it created?

NATO was created with the purpose of defending Western Europe from a possible Soviet invasion after World War II. On the other hand, there was another alliance formed against NATO, which was the Warsaw Treaty Organization, or the Warsaw Pact. The Warsaw Pact was stronger than NATO, so the allies had to use nuclear weapons to defend themselves, however they pulled back when the Cold War was over.

## II. HISTORY OF THE TOPIC

### A. Introduction to the Topic

NATO has been a great aid, especially stabilizing Europe after WWII, preventing conflicts and maintaining peace, overcoming the side effects of the Cold War... The original purpose of NATO was to keep the “Russians from America and the Germans down” after the Second World War, and control nuclear weapons. However, when the Cold War came to an end, and there were other committees, mostly worldwide and not just Europe, to replace NATO; this committee started to be known as “useless” and this gave it irrelevance. Irrelevance became a threat to NATO and made it seen as a waste of resources. NATO has around 30 members that are, for the most part, European countries and the United States. Some committees that have come to replace NATO, worldwide, are the following: Security Council, the European Union, General Assembly, among many others.

Another factor that has deviously affected NATO's irrelevance is the creation of the Warsaw Pact after the Second World War. The Warsaw Pact, is a defense treaty that was established on May 14th, 1955 in Poland by the Soviet Union, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania, although Albania renounced it in 1968. Although this treaty and NATO were opposed, their similarities have threatened one another, especially since they started an arms race through the period of the Cold War. This Warsaw Pact finally came to an end on February 25th,

1991, however it affected negatively in NATO's irrelevance, along with the creation of the United Nations and its committees. Irrelevance can be dangerous for the committee, mainly because relevance gives power, and respect to NATO and its members. Irrelevance can also make this committee look ridiculous and laughable to other committees of the UN.

Considering that the United Nations and NATO are allies and have many similar objectives, they may also be in a competition towards relevance. The UN was created in 1945, while NATO was established in 1949, only 4 years later. The United Nations has the advantage of including many more countries, and from many continents. On the other hand, NATO's countries are mainly European. Both organizations are independent, however the United Nations possess more global influence, while NATO is more powerful militarily, and as they are independent, NATO doesn't need the UN to approve whenever taking military action.

### **B. Evolution of the Topic**

Now, NATO is becoming a bit more useful with the recent events of the Russia and Ukraine conflict. However, since it seems to be less severe, the irrelevance becomes clearer and the United Nations begins to stand out more with the Security Council.

Ukraine can become an important piece for NATO, because it has the power of making this committee distinguished and important, however, the EU already has Ukraine as a candidate making this a difficult struggle for this committee. Russia's invasion has also affected negatively in making this country a part of NATO, since NATO defense itself as a whole, Ukraine being part of NATO at the moment would bring terrible consequences to this organization, such as being part of the war.

Another issue in hand is that the EU has, nearly, the same functions as NATO, and members, creating a competition between them for relevance

and criticism. Moreover, these committees have the necessity to fight for a place and make themselves relevant and all-purpose.

To continue, Europe's Economic Woes think that NATO spends too many resources on military defense and has asked this committee to cut short, specially to the United Kingdom. It is estimated that NATO spent around 1.2 trillion U.S. dollars in 2022. That is the highest they have spent on defense in a long time period.

### C. Relevant Events

- Ukraine applied to become a part of the EU on February 28, 2022.
- The Cold War ended on December 26, 1991 giving NATO no excuse for its existence.
- The EU was created on November the 1st, 1993, being considered "competition" for NATO.
- Ukraine applied to become a part of NATO on September 30th, 2022.
- The Warsaw Pact was signed on May 14, 1955.
- It is asked to NATO to cut short on spending over defense spending (specially to the United Kingdom).
- The Warsaw Pact was concluded on February 25th, 1991.
- The United Nations was created on October 24th, 1945, right after WWII, along with its committees.
- Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24th, 2022, giving NATO more relevance.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has also weakened many organizations (mostly economically), furthermore it has also given NATO more importance, apart from also having a negative impact in the association.
- Putin is trying to rebuild as much as the Soviet Union as he can, he is seeking for more territory, trying to expand Russia's borders. This also makes this organization pertinent.

- The United States questioned whether being part of NATO is of their interest, taking into consideration the power that the United States poses, and how it comes to benefit NATO.

### III. CURRENT ISSUES

#### A. Panorama

At the moment NATO may become futile and irrelevant by the second, it must become critical and important, to restore its former glory. Ukraine and the Russian invasion may become an important ally to the situation. Even though NATO is considered one of the best military committees, it is becoming irrelevant and insignificant because of the creation and success of other committees mentioned above. Take into consideration that NATO has one of the best militaries, it is also spending a lot of resources, just in 2022, being around 5% of the economy and this specializes in the United Kingdom. NATO comprises around 30 members and the EU comprises 27. Even if the EU has less, they can still compromise the relevance of NATO. The United Nations have also threatened NATO's relevance, given its power and its global influence.

#### A. Points of View

##### United States:

The United States has been very present to NATO and helpful, however, the US is calculated to be one of the most expensive countries especially when it comes to military. In just one year (in 2022), the US spent \$1.64 trillion dollars. This is compromising NATO because it has been called out for spending so many resources on military and defense equipment. The US is very fond of NATO and tries to protect it and its members in any way possible, even from irrelevance, however, it must protect it from spending resources on military equipment. What is odd is that the US questioned joining NATO in 1949, the reasons for this were that the US was preeminent at the time and believed in isolationism because of George Washington and the independence traumas of the country, their current leader has

warned them from alliances, however they decided to join anyways, mainly because of recent events on Europe. The treaty was signed on July 21st, 1949 and it was signed by President Truman. Once again in Donald Trump's presidency, he questioned whether the United States being part of NATO was of importance to this country, and if it would be of their benefit.

### Albania:

This delegation joined NATO on April the 1st, 2009, applying the year before in July, 2008. Albania is a bit cheaper than the US over the military, for example the average they spend on military is 78.60 million dollars. However, the military of this delegation is considered to be "very weak" and "unprepared" for future events, which leads to Albania being considered "barely any help" to NATO, considering that military is one of NATO's main objectives and advantages. Moreover, Albania is considered to be 115th out of the 142 countries on military strength and 91st on GDP (Gross Domestic Products) review. This delegation holds a Power Index score of 1.8466, 0.0000 is considered the perfect score, making Albania one of the least powerful countries of NATO, something considered peculiar for many.

### United Kingdom:

The UK was one of the first delegations to join NATO, they joined on April the 4th, 1949. Even with NATO's objectives being clear, the UK is one of the most vicious spenders on NATO over military and defense equipment, being particularly called out. In 2020, this delegation spent \$59.24 billion dollars, being 4.19% more than in 2019. Therefore in 2023 it is predicted for them to spend 48.4 billion dollars on GDP (Gross Domestic Products). It is known that their spending remains over 2% of GDP. In 2022 this delegation spent 71.4 billion british euros on military, being 5.9% of total government spending. With that, the British were called out for excessive military spending with NATO because overall, they spend annually more than 2% of GDP, and it is predicted to stay that way for some time. This makes the

United Kingdom a predominant country for NATO, and because of this country NATO has a better military service than the United Nations.

### Germany:

Germany was not one of the first delegations to join NATO because of the events of the First and Second World War, their behavior, debt, and negative fame. That was one of the main reasons to create NATO (and the United Nations), when it was known that Germany had joined, it made the situation controversial. However, it was successful and they did join soon after on May the 6th, 1955, even 40 years later, this delegation was not seen as an equal to the rest, for the reasons mentioned beforehand. Nowadays, it is seen as an equal and ally, because it has proved itself as a good country and ally. It is also economically stable, and has provided great aid to this organization. Even with Germany being a “passive” delegation and the controversy over them joining NATO, they are still predicted to spend \$82.0 billion dollars in 2024 and they spent \$60.1 billion in 2022, which makes Germany a key country to NATO.

## UN & EXTERNAL ACTIONS

### A. UN actions

The United Nations is a global organization founded in 1945 meant to maintain international peace. This organization is formed of most countries all around the world (including countries from all continents), furthermore it possesses great power, support, and resources. This means that the UN doesn't need any particular country or organization to stay relevant or to be part of it, and although NATO and the UN are allies, if NATO fails with relevance, it doesn't much affect the United Nations or its global influence. We can also take into consideration that all members of NATO are also members of the United Nations. For these reasons, the United Nations has not yet done anything to aid this situation, considering that there are many severe crises to attend at the moment, for example Russia's invasion towards Ukraine, the economic crisis, security

crisis, the post-pandemic side effects, between many others. Furthermore this issue may not seem relevant to many, for NATO members it is, and they must find a solution to continue its relevance.

### External actions

- Indirectly, Russia has helped the situation. This means that Russia's invasion towards Ukraine (besides being in most cases a negative impact) has made NATO relevant.
- NATO members, evidently, continue aiding to resolve this issue. Some help with resources, military wealth, funds etc. However, these delegations have not considered irrelevance as an issue.
- Ukraine applying for NATO has helped give this committee relevance and popularity over the media and make Russia's president Vladimir Putin furious, these actions may change the level of usefulness and relevance of NATO. However, NATO is not likely to accept Ukraine in war since it would make war a part of NATO in order to defend Ukraine.
- Sweden and Finland applying for NATO also makes it relevant and gives significance to the media, considering that both are considering passive delegations.

## II. CONCLUSION

Although NATO's irrelevance might seem as an insignificant issue to many; it has greatly affected the countries forming the organization. It is accurate to state that there are more severe issues to resolve, however not maintaining relevance on the organization might bring severe consequences that can have a great impact on the countries involved in NATO, especially since economic and security issues may be a great challenge if NATO becomes irrelevant.

There have been several situations that have been a great aid in making NATO continue to stay relevant. An example is Ukraine's war, given that has given an opportunity to NATO to aid, which has made it stay relevant. Furthermore, Russian president, Vladimir Putin is seeking to expand Russia's territory, to expand its borders, and to rebuild the Soviet Union as he can. Distinctly, countries that are part of this organization are trying to maintain NATO relevant because it is for their convenience. The struggle with the topic is to consider that, since this is an internal issue, for the most part, it will be harder to gain aid from countries or organizations that are not part of NATO, unless there is a major issue in the future.

### III. IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

- How much does my delegation spend on military and defense equipment annually?
- How much does it spend overall on the military?
- Is my delegation in constant conflicts with other delegations?
- How has my delegation helped and supported NATO in order to look relevant?
- How has my delegation supported NATO over the years?
- When did my delegation join NATO and on what terms?
- Is my delegation in the EU or planning to join?
- How strong is my delegation's military and defense system?

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