



**SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE**

**The Nature of Jerusalem's sovereign belonging (State of Palestine v. State of Israel)**

**Chairs:**

**Alexander Conahay & Al Ghalia El Boukili**

Dear Delegates,

We Alexander Conahay and Al Ghalia El Boukili are thrilled to welcome you to this year's 10th annual TMUN conference and to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPO). The topic you will be discussing is The Nature of Jerusalem's sovereign belonging: Historical Claims, Religious Relevance, International Resolutions and Security concerns.

## **Topic Introduction:**

Due to its historical and religious importance as well as its political significance, Jerusalem is one of the most contested areas in the world in the struggle between the Palestinian State and the Israeli State. In this regard, this city which is an ancient seat of three religions; Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, possesses several identities and claims. Sovereignty over Jerusalem and its political status is not just a fight for land, it is a contest of narratives, patriotism and history. Good Friday always aims to untangle the intricate threads of Jerusalem's sovereign belonging in the modern era and to discuss the legal and historic aspects that help the two sides' competing Palestine and Israel claims and broader and more unified picture of peace and security in the region.

Perhaps the most important and the most sensitive of all the disputes related to the Israeli-Palestinian war is the question of who controls Jerusalem. While Jerusalem remains a deeply contested land, what is most significant of all is both the history attached to this land and how this history has translated into sovereignty and control over space. The collective identity of both Israelis and Palestinians hinges around the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem contains many of the important religious centers, sites and spaces beloved by each of the three Abrahamic faith cultures. The jigsaw of Jerusalem has become the focus of many international discussions and many resolutions by the United Nations.

## **Background:**

Conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians has always been captured in the intricate history of Jerusalem, a place of utmost significance to Jews, Christians and Muslims alike. This ancient city is home to not only the worship of its religion but also places that hold political and cultural weight. Its intricate past of rule and control embodies a centuries entrenched contest for power, belonging and authority that extends beyond today's local conflict into a global paradigm. The positioning of the city during the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict and subsequently the Six Day war which saw East Jerusalem further cemented facilitated Israel assuming its key geopolitics role in the region. To this day, Jerusalem is endorsed as the "eternal capital" of the Israeli religion, as well as the heartland of the Palestinians. For the world in general, governing the status of Jerusalem has always been an everlasting headache, even as a two-state solution purports to provide a reservoir of dualism over the city, such has not materialized as a result of hardened positions and difficult history. The contested status of Jerusalem's political scene deals with a more underlying phenomenon, the changing balance of power and emergence of concerns of a more multipolar world as seen from the emergence of the region of East Asia has compelled countries to reconsider international standards and definitions.

## **SPECPO Overview:**

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPO) aims to address issues related to decolonization, sovereignty, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. SPECPO tackles intricate international concerns such as the sovereignty of contested regions, the rights of indigenous populations, and the legal status of occupied territories. SPECPO's role in recent years has become even more critical due to its spotlight towards cases of disputed sovereignty and impact from colonial legacies in instability prone regions.

This year, SPECPO will dive into the highly sensitive issue of Jerusalem's sovereign belonging, examining historical claims, legal arguments, religious implications, and international positions to seek a peaceful resolution for this ongoing dispute. As members of SPECPO, delegates will explore both sides and claims of the Israel-Palestine conflict over Jerusalem and work towards drafting resolutions that consider diplomatic, legal, and humanitarian perspectives.

## **Questions to Consider**

1. What are the historical claims of both Israel and Palestine over Jerusalem, and how have these shaped current political positions?
2. How should the religious importance of Jerusalem to Judaism, Islam, and Christianity influence decisions on its sovereignty?
3. What international laws or precedents can be applied to address the sovereignty dispute over Jerusalem?
4. What role have previous United Nations resolutions and peace efforts played in shaping the current status of Jerusalem?
5. Should East and West Jerusalem be treated differently in terms of sovereignty, and if so, how?
6. How does the unresolved status of Jerusalem impact broader regional stability in the Middle East?
7. How can both states ensure the protection of human rights, including freedom of movement and access to holy sites, within a shared or divided Jerusalem?
8. What role do neighboring countries and regional alliances play in influencing the sovereignty and governance of Jerusalem, and how might their involvement affect potential resolutions?

## **Key Terms and Words**

1. ***Sovereignty***: The authority of a state to govern itself or another state.
2. ***Jerusalem***: A city of significant religious and historical importance to multiple faiths.
3. ***International Resolutions***: Decisions or recommendations made by international bodies, such as the UN, regarding disputes or conflicts.
4. ***Stakeholder***: An individual or group with an interest or concern in a particular issue or outcome.
5. ***Occupied Territories***: Areas seized during conflict and governed by a military force. For many in the international community, East Jerusalem is considered an occupied territory after its capture by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War, contributing to the dispute over the city.
6. ***Status Quo***: An arrangement that maintains existing practices, especially around religious sites in Jerusalem, to avoid conflict. The status quo agreement governs access to the city's sacred sites, especially within the Old City.
7. ***Human Rights***: Fundamental rights and freedoms to which all individuals are entitled, including freedom of movement and access to religious sites. In Jerusalem, the protection of human rights is crucial to ensuring both Israeli and Palestinian populations can access their cultural and religious heritage with dignity.

## **Requirements**

1. A position Paper in relation to the topic. (NO AI OR PLAGIARISM)
  - Due November 22nd. Email it to both of us with the subject “Position Paper”- [your country & your name]
2. A resolution paper in relation to the topic while respecting and understanding other country's stance.
  - Due November 22nd Email it to both of us with the subject “Resolution Paper” - [your country & your name]
3. Conduct thorough research on the committee’s topic.
4. Develop well-thought-out solutions to address the issue at hand.
5. Be fully prepared with all your points and motions.

## **Useful Links:**

### **MUN Procedures;**

- [https://www.tangiermun.org/uploads/3/9/9/5/39954039/points\\_and\\_motions\\_tmun\\_.pdf](https://www.tangiermun.org/uploads/3/9/9/5/39954039/points_and_motions_tmun_.pdf)
- <https://teimun.org/mun-101-the-rules-of-procedure/>

### **Position paper:**

- <https://bestdelegate.com/how-to-write-a-winning-position-paper/>
- <https://www.wisemee.com/how-to-write-a-mun-position-paper/>

### **Resolution paper**

- [https://www.tangiermun.org/uploads/3/9/9/5/39954039/resolution\\_paper\\_guide\\_1\\_.pdf](https://www.tangiermun.org/uploads/3/9/9/5/39954039/resolution_paper_guide_1_.pdf)



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