



STUDY GUIDE
Historical Security Council



Resolving the Korean War



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II. Letter from Chairs

Dear delegates,

This is our first chance to welcome you all with utmost pleasure to ZaMUN 2025. We thank you deeply for choosing to participate in the Historical Security Council.

With this study guide we want to provide you with the historical background of the topic, current situation and hopefully much more. It is important to note that we cannot cover each country on its own as deeply as we would like, that means this study guide should only act as a good starting ground for **your own research on your country's policy.**

We believe this study guide will help you with your research and provide you with information to make our committee sessions full of fruitful debates and at the end to make a resolution that really makes an impact.

Lastly, we really wish for this committee to be not only a great experience for us but also for you. If you have any questions regarding the topic or the MUN in general be sure to get in touch with one of us. We can't wait to see you all.

Your chairs **Viktor** and **Matej**



III. Historical Background

The roots of the Korean War stretch far deeper than the gunfire that erupted on June 25, 1950. They are tangled in decades of colonial domination, global conflict, and a rapidly polarizing world order. To understand how Korea became a battleground for Cold War ideologies, one must look back to empires, revolutions, and the bitter scars left by World War II.

For over three decades, Korea existed under the iron grip of Japanese imperial rule. From 1910 to 1945, Japan stripped the peninsula of its sovereignty, exploited its resources, and suppressed its culture. When Japan surrendered to the Allied Powers in August 1945, Korea was suddenly and chaotically liberated. But with liberation came division. With no clear plan in place and a race to secure influence in the vacuum left by Japan, the United States and the Soviet Union hastily agreed to divide Korea along the 38th parallel, ostensibly as a temporary measure.

In practice, it was the beginning of a permanent rupture.

In the North, Soviet forces helped establish a communist regime under Kim Il-sung, a guerrilla leader with strong ties to Moscow. In the South, the U.S. supported the rise of Syngman Rhee, an American-educated nationalist and staunch anti-communist. Both men claimed to represent the entirety of the Korean people. Both rejected the legitimacy of the other. And both were preparing for unification not through negotiation, but through confrontation.

Attempts at diplomacy quickly disintegrated. UN-sponsored elections were held only in the South in 1948, resulting in the formation of the Republic of Korea. In response, the North declared the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with Kim Il-sung at its helm. Two separate Koreas were born, both claiming sole legitimacy over the entire peninsula.

Meanwhile, the global context was shifting. The fragile alliance between the U.S. and the USSR, forged in the fires of World War II, had collapsed into mutual suspicion and proxy rivalry. The Cold War had begun in earnest. In 1949, two key events reshaped the strategic landscape: the Soviet Union tested its first atomic bomb, and China fell to communism under Mao Zedong. The



West feared the domino effect that more nations would follow. The East, in turn, feared encirclement.

By 1950, both Korean governments were engaged in escalating border skirmishes and covert incursions. Yet it was Kim Il-sung who moved first. After securing reluctant support from Stalin and Mao, he launched a full-scale invasion of the South on June 25, 1950, with the goal of reunifying Korea under communist rule.





IV. Current situation

It is July 1953. For three brutal years, the Korean Peninsula has been ravaged by a war that was never officially declared. What began as a lightning strike by North Korean forces across the 38th parallel in June 1950 has spiralled into a grinding, globalized bloodbath a war that has claimed millions of lives, drawn in superpowers, and inched the world closer than ever to the unthinkable: nuclear escalation.

The fragile post-World War II order is showing its cracks. In the North, Kim Il-sung, with support from the Soviet Union and massive reinforcements from Mao Zedong's China, fights to unify the peninsula under communist rule. In the South, Syngman Rhee, fiercely anti-communist and increasingly volatile, clings to the dream of a free and unified Korea. Behind him stands the United States, spearheading a United Nations coalition determined to push back the red tide and contain communism at all costs.

But what was once a war of swift movement has devolved into a deadly stalemate. For two years, both sides have fought and bled for mere yards of territory along a jagged, shifting front. Hills are won, then lost. Villages are captured, then reduced to rubble. And through it all, civilians suffer displaced, starved, bombed into oblivion.

The war has now taken on a larger meaning not just for Koreans, but for the world. The Cold War has found its first major battlefield, and neither bloc is willing to blink first. The spectre of nuclear weapons looms large, particularly after General MacArthur's controversial dismissal in 1951 for suggesting their use. Behind every negotiation is the question no one dares ask aloud: how far is too far?

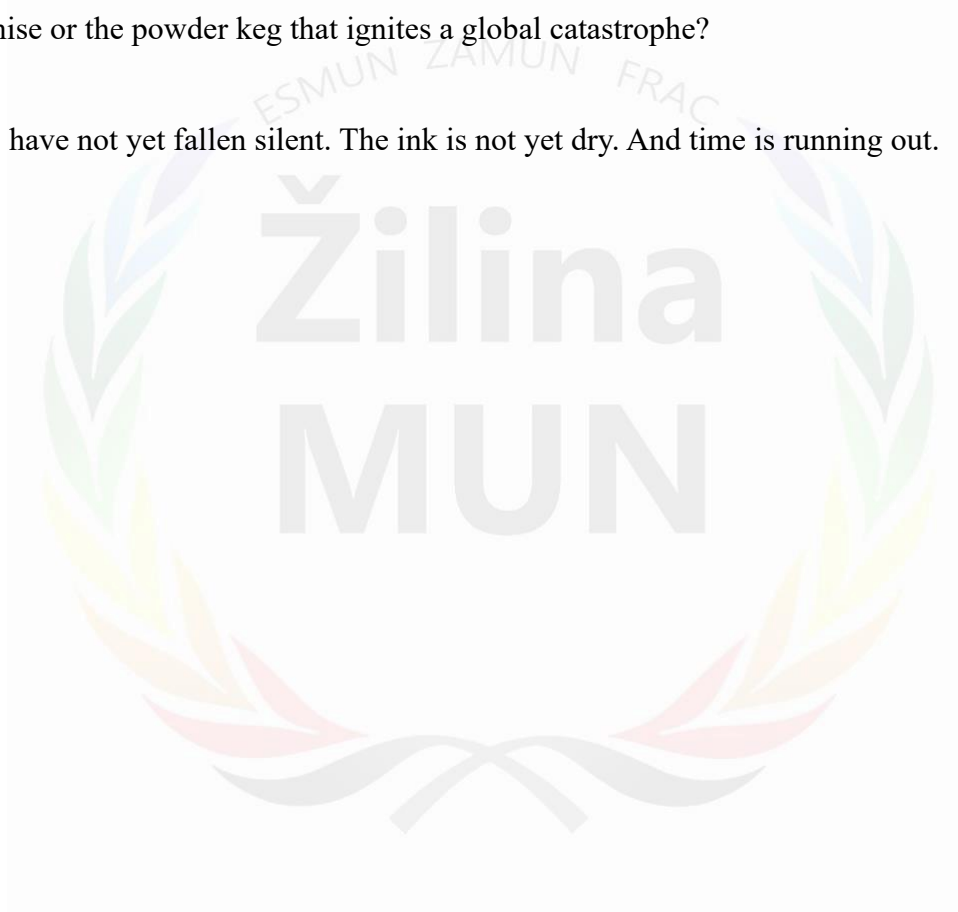
Now, at Panmunjom, after countless rounds of talks many ending in deadlock, walkouts, and mutual accusations diplomats hover on the edge of a possible armistice. The war-weary world watches with bated breath. The proposed agreement would halt the fighting, establish a Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), and allow for the exchange of prisoners of war. But not everyone is on board.



President Rhee in the South is staunchly opposed to a ceasefire that does not guarantee reunification under his government. He is already unilaterally released thousands of anti-communist POWs in protest, a move that nearly torpedoed negotiations. Meanwhile, whispers in Washington, Moscow, and Beijing suggest that no one is truly satisfied with a mere pause. Each side fears the consequences of peace almost as much as the continuation of war.

As this committee convenes, the stakes could not be higher. Will this be the war that ends in compromise or the powder keg that ignites a global catastrophe?

The guns have not yet fallen silent. The ink is not yet dry. And time is running out.





V. Research

We believe and hope this Study Guide is helpful. Keep in mind that this is only the start of your research. The most important research is the one you will do on your own. When doing your own research keep in mind these recommendations.

- Make sure you know basic information about your assigned country/group – leader, population, political system, foreign relations (especially with other members of the committee), etc.
- Check your country's policies and approach.
- It is recommended to familiarize yourself with the policies of other countries in the committee.
- In case you are stuck or unsure how to continue further, do not hesitate to reach out to us.



VI. Position Paper

The position paper should be at least a half-page document, but one page is the standard, outlining your country's involvement and stance on the topic. It should cover these points:

- General overview of the situation
- Present your country's approach to the agenda topic.
- Describe your country's past and present actions undertaken regarding the agenda topic, highlighting their effectiveness or lack of it.
- Introduce concrete ideas and plans for tackling the issue.

Each of the points should take up one paragraph. Please do not make the position paper too long, as being precise and concise are virtues that we are looking for in delegates. At the end of position paper make sure to include citations as plagiarism is highly discouraged. Make sure your position paper, as well as your statements during the debates, correspond with the country's policy. Including factual knowledge, such as charts and statistics is highly recommended. If you are struggling with writing your position paper, you might find this [guide](#) helpful. In case you are still unsure, do not hesitate to reach out to us.

After completing the Position Paper, please submit it through mymun.com as a .pdf file. If you do not manage to send it via mymun you may send it through discord.