

Historical Supreme Soviet Congress

Preventing the Disintegration of the Soviet Union



Message from the Dais:

Dear delegates,

This is your chair Roza Kassem, Dental Technician and Dental Assistant. This is my 7th year in simulation models and especially in MUN. MUN isn't all about winning an award at the end of the conference. It is the experience you get to live within every motion said. This committee is a one of kind, putting the fate of the world between your hands. This is your time to shine!

My name is Alexandre Razzouk a senior political science and international relations student, your co-chair for the committee. This is my 7th year in the world of MUN and simulation models. I am here to ensure you have the best time during the conference and enjoy as much as possible, and to make sure you delegates stay politically correct and come up with creative ideas. Please make sure you do as much research as you can because it is your currency during the conference. I wish you the best time during the conference, looking forward to seeing what you delegates have to offer.

My name is Maroun Hedary, I am a Senior political science student at the American University of Beirut and I will be your Director for this committee. This is my third year in MUN and BEYMUN and I am really excited to meet you all. I will be making sure that the whole committee goes to plan and that it stays interesting, I hope you delegates are ready for intense political debate and diplomacy, you are going to need it.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you!

Introduction to The Committee:

The **Supreme Soviet** of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) served as the highest legislative authority from its establishment in 1938 until the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Designed to function as the central legislative body, it was intended to represent the will of the Soviet populace within the framework of a socialist state. The **Supreme Soviet** was structured as a bicameral institution, comprising two distinct chambers: the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.



The Soviet Congress of the Union was constituted to represent the general population, with deputies elected based on population size, ensuring proportional representation across the USSR. Conversely, the Soviet of Nationalities aimed to represent the diverse ethnic and national groups within the Soviet Union. This chamber's composition was determined by allocating a fixed number of deputies to each union republic, autonomous republic, autonomous oblast, and autonomous okrug, irrespective of their population. This structure sought to balance the representation of the USSR's vast and varied demographic

landscape, acknowledging both the majority and minority groups within the federation.

Despite its formal legislative authority, the **Supreme Soviet's** actual power was largely nominal. In practice, it functioned primarily as a rubber-stamp body, convening infrequently—often only twice a year for brief sessions—to approve decisions pre-formulated by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). The Presidium of the **Supreme Soviet**, a permanent body elected from its members, handled routine governmental functions between these sessions. This arrangement reflected the centralized nature of Soviet governance, where real political power was concentrated within the CPSU's Politburo.

Roles and Relation to the Topic:

In our context and for the sake of the conference, the Historical **Supreme Soviet** Congress committee is tasked with deliberating on strategies to prevent the dissolution of the Soviet Union—a pivotal event that reshaped global politics in the late 20th century. Delegates will assume the roles of deputies within the **Supreme Soviet**, engaging in debates and formulating policies aimed at addressing the myriad challenges that led to the USSR's collapse.

The committee's role involves a comprehensive examination of the political, economic, and social factors that contributed to the Soviet Union's disintegration. Delegates are expected to analyze the effectiveness of existing policies during the late 1980s and early 1990s, assess the impact of reform initiatives such as perestroika and glasnost, and propose alternative strategies that could have been implemented to avert the collapse.

The resolution of this debate will require a deep understanding of the internal dynamics of Soviet governance, the interplay between the central authority and the republics it consists off and the external influence exerted by the international community to navigate the intricate geopolitical landscape of the mentioned period.

Disclaimer: This committee is historical in the sense that it is stimulated at a specific date. Delegates of the Historical **Supreme Soviet** Congress must not refer to any information after the 7th and 8th of November 1989. As a delegate in this committee, you need to go back in time and consider those 2 days as your present. Do note that the events that occurred on the 7th and on the 8th are not to be acknowledged due to the potential outcomes of your decisions in the conference.

Rules of Procedure

This committee will operate on the basis of the regular BEYMUN rules of procedure. Delegates are required to use the following motions:

1. Setting the Agenda

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to set the agenda in favor of Topic A/B. "

Yet, this motion will not be used in the conference since there is 1 topic.

2. Speaker's List

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to open the Speaker's List with a speaker's time of [Y] seconds. "

3. Moderated Caucus

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into a moderated caucus to discuss '[Subtopic Y]' for a total time of [Z] minutes, with a speaker's time of [W] seconds. "

4. Unmoderated Caucus

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into an unmoderated caucus to [form blocs and alliances / discuss resolutions/work on the working paper or draft resolution / discuss the crisis] for a total time of [Y] minutes. "

5. Consultation of the Whole

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into a consultation of the whole to discuss [the recommendations elaborated in the previous unmoderated caucus / the crisis] for a total time of [Y] minutes. "

6. Adjourn the Meeting

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to adjourn the meeting for [Y] minutes for the purpose of [a lunch break / a coffee break]. "

7. Solicit a Third Party

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to solicit [Third Party Y], as they possess relevant information or expertise regarding [Subtopic Z / the crisis]. "

8. Press Conference

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into a press conference to discuss [a resolution related to Y / the crisis] for a total time of [Z] minutes. "

9. Extend the Time of the Unmoderated Caucus

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to extend the duration of the current unmoderated caucus by [Y] minutes. "

10. Introduce the Draft Resolution

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to introduce the draft resolutions with a speaker's time of [Y] seconds per author or co-sponsor. "

11. Close Debate and Move into Voting Procedure

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to close the debate and move directly into voting procedure. "

(Note: This motion requires a two-thirds majority to pass.

Written Motions:

1. **Right of Reply:** Delegates can request the right of reply to another delegate who has offended their country. There is no right of reply to a right of reply.
2. **Appeal to the Chair's Decision:** If the delegates feel that the chair has made an unfair decision, the delegates can send it as a note to the Chair.

Points:

- **Point of Order:** Used to correct a procedural or factual mistake. Interruptive, but do not overuse it.
- **Point of Personal Privilege:** Request to leave or adjust comfort (e.g., temperature). Interruptive.
- **Point of Inquiry:** Ask about the rules or current stage. Interruptive.
- **Point of Information:** Ask a question when the floor is open. Not interruptive.
- **Point to Instigate a Debate:** Challenge another delegate's resolution stance. Interruptive and subject to chair's approval.

Introduction to the Topic

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked the end of a significant chapter in global history, resulting from a concurrence of political, economic, and social factors. Understanding these factors is crucial for developing strategies that could have been employed to prevent the collapse.

Economically, the USSR faced profound challenges. The centrally planned economy, which had initially spurred rapid industrialization, became increasingly inefficient and stagnant. By the 1970s, the lack of market mechanisms stifled innovation and productivity, leading to a decline in economic growth. Attempts at reform, such as Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika* (restructuring) in the 1980s, aimed to introduce market elements and decentralize economic control. However, these reforms were often contradictory and poorly implemented, exacerbating economic instability. The disconnect between the centralized command structure and the push for decentralization created confusion and inefficiency, further weakening the economy.

Politically, the Soviet Union grappled with rising nationalist sentiments and separatist movements within its constituent republics. The policy of *glasnost* (openness) introduced by Gorbachev allowed for increased political discourse and criticism of the government. While intended to foster transparency and reform, *glasnost* also unleashed suppressed ethnic tensions and calls for independence, particularly in the Baltic states and the Caucasus region. The central government's inability to effectively address these movements without resorting to repression highlighted its weakening grip on power.

The failed August 1991 coup further destabilized the Soviet Union. Hardline Communist officials attempted to seize control to halt Gorbachev's reforms and prevent the signing of a new union treaty that would have decentralized power. The coup's failure weakened the Communist Party's authority and emboldened republics seeking independence. In the aftermath, Gorbachev's efforts to preserve the union through political restructuring, including convening the Congress of People's Deputies and dissolving it alongside the **Supreme Soviet** to reinforce executive control, were insufficient to stem the tide of disintegration.

Socially, the Soviet populace experienced a crisis of confidence in the government. Economic hardships, exposure to governmental shortcomings through *glasnost*, and a desire for greater personal freedoms eroded public support for the Communist regime. The younger generation became increasingly disillusioned with the system, seeking alternatives that promised better economic opportunities and political freedoms.

In addressing the prevention of the Soviet Union's collapse, delegates must consider a multifaceted approach that encompasses economic stabilization, political reforms to address nationalist aspirations, and social policies to rebuild public trust. Strategies could include implementing gradual economic reforms to introduce market mechanisms without causing widespread disruption, creating a more federalized political structure to grant greater autonomy to republics while maintaining union cohesion, and initiating social programs aimed

at improving living standards and fostering a renewed sense of Soviet identity.

Role and Scope of Work of the Soviet Congress

The **Supreme Soviet**'s role encompassed legislative functions, including the passage of laws, approval of state budgets, and ratification of international treaties. It also had the authority to appoint key government officials, such as the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and to oversee the work of the Council of Ministers, the Supreme Court, and the Procurator General. In practice, however, the **Supreme Soviet**'s functions were largely ceremonial, with real power residing in the CPSU's Politburo. The infrequent sessions and the dominance of the Communist Party meant that the **Supreme Soviet** primarily served to legitimize decisions made by the party leadership.

During the conference the **Supreme Soviet** shall take the role of an advisory and ruling body taking into consideration the input of all member countries as well as invited countries to determine the fate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The committee will rule on whether the USSR shall remain active with major reforms or if it shall come to an end and let history take its natural course. Delegates of different blocs must try to push forward their personal agendas while at the same time navigating the geopolitical landscape and the need of the Soviet countries for individualism. The Congress will draft **Order No.1** which will determine the fate of the union.

History of the Topic

- **Bolshevik Revolution (1917):**

In 1917, Russia experienced two revolutions that changed its political future. There were mass protests, strikes, and desertions of the military in February that caused the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II, ending centuries of Romanov rule. A Provisional Government was formed to rule the country, but it could not maintain the country under control,

continue World War I, and address economic suffering. Grievances spread rapidly, especially among soldiers and workers. By October 1917, the Bolsheviks, a radical left-wing Marxist party under Vladimir Lenin, moved in on the chaos. Crying "peace, land, and bread," they made a revolution and seized power from the Provisional Government in Petrograd (now St. Petersburg). The Bolsheviks aimed at establishing a communist state on socialist ideology and the elimination of capitalist institutions. Their uprising marked the beginning of Soviet Russia, which eventually became the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). This watershed not only ended Russia's brief experiment with liberal democracy but also laid the foundation for a long and stormy period of civil war, political purges, authoritarian rule, and global ideological struggle. The October Revolution ranks as one of the most significant political upheavals of the 20th century.

- **Russian Civil War:**

From 1918 to 1921, Russia was devastated by a brutal civil war between the Red Army, which consisted of Bolsheviks and their supporters, and the White Army, an informal coalition of monarchists, liberals, and other anti-communist forces. The conflict erupted after the Bolsheviks took power in 1917, when other factions opposed their rule. The conflict was characterized by mass violence, famine, and foreign intervention, with nations such as Britain, France, and the U.S. backing the Whites. But the Red Army, led by figures such as Leon Trotsky, was more organized and eventually prevailed, securing Bolshevik dominance and laying the ground for the creation of the USSR.

- **Formation of the USSR (1922):**

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

In December 1922, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) officially existed, a new beginning in the Russian Civil War's wake. The founding members were Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Transcaucasian Federation (which included present-day Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan). The republics were united under one federal government, though real power remained in Moscow. The USSR was dominated by the Communist Party alone, whose single-party system had no space for political opposition. The objective of the state was to create a classless, socialist society based on Marxist-Leninist principles. The economy was centralized, and private ownership was abolished, with all industry and land in state control. While the republics in theory were all equal partners, in practice the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) politically and economically dominated the

union. The formation of the USSR laid the groundwork for what would develop into one of the two superpowers of the 20th century.

Lenin's Death and Stalin's Rise (1924–1929):



After the death of **Vladimir Lenin** in **1924**, a fierce power struggle erupted within the leadership of the Communist Party over who would succeed him. The two main contenders were **Leon Trotsky**, a brilliant revolutionary and military leader, and **Joseph Stalin**, the General Secretary of the Communist Party. Although Trotsky was widely regarded as Lenin's likely successor, Stalin skillfully built a base of support within the party bureaucracy. Through political alliances, manipulation, and the elimination of rivals, Stalin gradually undermined Trotsky's influence. By **1929**, Stalin had successfully **consolidated power**, forcing Trotsky into exile and establishing himself as the USSR's undisputed leader.

- **Stalin's Rule (1929–1953):**

Rapid Industrialization & Collectivization:

In the late 1920s and 1930s, Joseph Stalin initiated a series of bold Five-Year Plans to rapidly transform the USSR into a major industrial power from a largely agrarian society. The government set strict

production targets for heavy industry like steel, coal, and machinery, generally at the expense of consumer goods. Along with industrialization, Stalin enacted the Collectivization of Agriculture, which forced millions of peasants to give up their land and join enormous state-run farms. This policy met with enormous resistance and disastrous consequences, especially in Ukraine, where it resulted in the Holodomor Famine (1932–33), which killed millions through starvation.

The Great Purge (1936–1938):

In the late 1930s, Joseph Stalin launched a brutal campaign known as the Great Purge to eliminate real and perceived foes of his total control. Not only were powerful political rivals in the Communist Party attacked but also military leaders, scholars, bureaucrats, and ordinary citizens. Through forced confessions, show trials, and fabricated charges of treason, sabotage, or counter-revolutionary work, Stalin created an environment of mass terror and suspicion. Over 700,000 people were murdered, and millions more were imprisoned in the Gulag network—strict labor camps dotted all over the Soviet Union. The conditions within the Gulags were extremely brutal, with most of the prisoners dying of hard labor, starvation, disease, or exposure. Even the Red Army leadership was not spared, crippling Soviet military capability on the brink of World War II. The Purge badly harmed Soviet society, suppressed criticism, and left a legacy of repression that would define much of Stalin's rule.

• World War II (1939–1945):

Start of the War:

In 1939, the Soviet Union shocked the world by signing into the “Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact”, a non-aggression treaty with Nazi Germany. The secret treaty had a secret protocol dividing Eastern Europe into spheres of influence. Upon Germany's invasion of western Poland, the USSR invaded the eastern half of Poland, effectively dividing it between the two. The Soviets continued further to annex the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and invaded Finland during the Winter War (1939–1940). Despite encountering strong resistance, the Soviets forced Finland to the brink of ceding territory. This action prolonged Soviet control but fueled global suspicions.

Nazi Invasion:

In June 1941, Nazi Germany ruptured the “Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact” by initiating Operation Barbarossa, a colossus of a surprise assault on

the Soviet Union. The USSR was caught off guard, and initially met with disastrous losses as millions of soldiers were killed, captured, or wounded, and vast areas of land—Ukraine and parts of Russia—were overrun into German hands. The Soviets, however, regrouped and, with ferocious determination, launched retaliatory attacks. Decisive fights like Stalingrad (1942–43) and Kursk (1943) turned the tide in favor of the Red Army. By 1945, Soviet forces had pushed into Eastern Europe and captured Berlin, largely helping Germany's defeat during World War II.

Soviet Role:

The Soviet Union played a crucial role as one of the great Allied powers during World War II, bearing the brunt of the Eastern Front against Nazi Germany. Having endured the devastating blow of Operation Barbarossa, the Red Army incrementally pushed back the German forces through a series of brutal and costly battles. In May 1945, Soviet troops captured Berlin, forcing Germany's surrender and the conclusion of the war in Europe. But victory was purchased at an incredible cost. The USSR sacrificed 27 million lives, military and civilian, and widespread destruction of cities, infrastructure, and farmland in its western provinces.

• Post-War & Cold War Beginnings (1945–1947):

USSR expands influence:

Following the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945, the Soviet Union extended its influence over much of Eastern Europe, including countries like Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany. As Soviet troops had liberated these countries from German occupation, they remained in the area, giving Moscow massive political clout. The USSR quickly went on to install pro-Soviet communist governments, often through the use of fixed elections, political repression, and suppression of opposition groups. These nations collectively came to be known as the Eastern Bloc—a belt of Soviet-allied states intended to protect the USSR from future invasions and advance ideological hegemony. Although these nations had a façade of sovereignty, they were actually under Soviet domination, with their domestic and foreign policies aligned firmly to Moscow. The creation of the Eastern Bloc strained relations with the West and was one of the events that best contributed to the onset of the Cold War, where Europe was in rival ideological blocs.

Tensions with the West:

After World War II, there were stark contrasts between the Western Allies—primarily the United States and Britain—and the Soviet Union as to the fate of post-war Europe. The West wanted democratic governments and free markets, while the USSR wanted to spread Communism and maintain control over Eastern Europe. The tensions grew as the Soviets tightened their grip on countries like Poland, Romania, and Hungary, installing pro-communist governments.

In 1946, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill most famously declared that an "Iron Curtain" had descended upon Europe, symbolizing the widening divide between democratic Western and communist Eastern Europe. In response to growing Soviet domination, U.S. President Harry Truman introduced the "Truman Doctrine" in 1947, pledging American aid to countries fighting against communism, starting with aid to Greece and Turkey.

This was the beginning of the Cold War, a period of geopolitical rivalry, ideological rivalry, and tension between the United States and the Soviet Union.

- **Cold War Starts (1947):**

The rivalry between the USA and the USSR turned into a global Cold War once World War II ended. Even though the two superpowers never engaged each other directly in combat, their ideological, political, and military differences shaped global affairs for decades. The USA espoused capitalism and democracy, whereas the USSR advocated for communism and a one-party system. This ideological struggle ignited a series of proxy wars, such as in Korea and Vietnam, where each superpower supported opposing sides. The competition overspilled into the Arms Race, with both nations rapidly acquiring nuclear arsenals, and the Space Race, with the USSR's "Sputnik" launch and the USA's Moon Landing in 1969. Espionage, covert operations, and propaganda became core tactics in this worldwide battle for influence.

Topic in Depth

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 was the result of decades-old political, economic, and social problems. One of the prime causes was economic stagnation under central planning that prioritized heavy industry and defense production over consumer demand. System inefficiencies became increasingly evident through the 1970s and 1980s.

Earlier, Stalin's bloody purges had destroyed political and military leaderships, instating a culture of terror and weakening long-term leadership. During and following World War II, the USSR established the Eastern Bloc by installing communist regimes all over Eastern Europe, heightening tensions during the Cold War and draining Soviet resources. In the 1980s, Mikhail Gorbachev introduced reform policies—*Perestroika* (economic restructuring) and *Glasnost* (openness)—to modernize the system. But these reforms inadvertently exposed vulnerabilities in the system and let loose public grievances. Nationalist forces gained strength in republics like the Baltics, Ukraine, and Georgia, demanding independence. In August 1991, hardline communists made a failed coup that further weakened Soviet authority and helped to build popular support for Russian leader Boris Yeltsin. By December 1991, major republics had announced their independence, and the USSR's collapse marked the end of the Cold War. The disintegration of a once-mighty superpower reshaped the global political map and led to a new post-Soviet era.

- **Economic Stagnation and Inefficiency:**

The Soviet economy was extremely centralized, with the government controlling the majority of industries and determining quotas for production. While the system worked well in the early years, particularly in military manufacturing and heavy industry, it became increasingly inefficient over the decades. By the 1970s and 1980s, the economy had stalled.

There was a lack of innovation, poor management, and a focus on quantity over quality in production. Consumer goods were in short supply, and living standards for most citizens were low. Additionally, the military-industrial complex absorbed enormous amounts of resources, and Soviet leaders invested heavily in defense at the expense of civilian sectors.

The government attempted to reform the economy, but the attempts either were too modest or were undermined by entrenched bureaucracies and the lack of market incentives. This led to a debilitating economic crisis by the 1980s.

- **Stalin's Purges and Political Repression:**

During Joseph Stalin's rule (1924–1953), the Soviet state was marked by totalitarian political repression. Stalin perpetrated a sequence of purges of perceived enemies in the Communist Party, military, and

society during the 1930s. These purges, also referred to as the Great Terror, killed over 700,000 people, with millions more imprisoned in Gulags (forced labor camps). This had the consequence of spreading fear and distrust and undermining the political system of the USSR.

The purges of Stalin severely weakened the Soviet leadership by eliminating a large number of competent military leaders and intellectuals, and this would finally have huge implications during the Cold War era. This period of repression spawned a general atmosphere of authoritarian domination, which continued far beyond the death of Stalin in 1953, and was in part a cause of the stagnation and eventual collapse of the Soviet system.

- **Mikhail Gorbachev's Reforms (*Perestroika* and *Glasnost*):**

Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985 with a goal of reforming the Soviet Union and avoiding its collapse. He introduced two key policies:

Perestroika ("restructuring"): Tried to transform the Soviet economic system by decentralizing economic power and introducing aspects of market-oriented reform, such as allowing private enterprise and reducing the role of the state in certain areas.

Glasnost ("openness"): Aimed at increased political openness, greater freedom of speech, and public discussion. Glasnost led to more criticism of the government and the Communist Party.

While these reforms were designed to get the USSR back into life, they had the ironic effect of making deep weakness in the system manifest. Economic reform generated chaos and even accelerated shortages, while political openness generated pressure for additional and more severe change.

- **Nationalism and the Struggle for Independence:**

Nationalism was the single most significant reason for the collapse of the USSR. The majority of the Soviet republics, particularly those in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, historically resented Soviet hegemony and desired more autonomy or outright independence. Republics like the Baltics (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia) were the first to demand independence. They had been occupied by the Soviet Union earlier and were eager to achieve freedom. In the Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, and other republics, a rising enthusiasm for national identity and independence witnessed protests, strikes, and demands for independence. The Soviet government could not suppress these

movements, which damaged Soviet unity. The rise of ethnic nationalism, especially in the Caucasus and Central Asia, challenged the concept of one Soviet Union.

- **WWII Strategy and Aftermath: Soviet Control Over Eastern Europe:**

Following World War II, the Soviet Union was the major force behind the defeat of Nazi Germany. The war also had strategic long-term effects on the USSR's outlook. After the war, Stalin took steps to guarantee Soviet security by creating a buffer zone in Eastern Europe. The Eastern Bloc was formed as the USSR placed pro-communist regimes in Poland, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and other countries. This sphere of influence helped to consolidate the USSR's political and military power over Eastern Europe and contributed to the division of Europe during the Cold War. Stalin's post-WWII territorial ambitions would also lead to a decades-long Cold War with the West, as the United States and its allies resisted Soviet expansionism. The strategic wartime alliances helped establish the geopolitical reality that would come to characterize the second half of the 20th century.

- **The 1991 Coup Attempt:**

A faction of hardline communist officials, who were dominated by members of the KGB and the military, attempted a coup against Gorbachev in August 1991. They thought that Gorbachev's policies were bringing down the Soviet system and that he was surrendering too much to the West and the republics. The coup was mismanaged and confronted by massive popular resistance, particularly in Moscow, where Boris Yeltsin, who was the then-president of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), led the resistance. Yeltsin rode atop a tank near the Russian parliament to call people to join him. The coup was thwarted within days, but it damaged Gorbachev's hold on power extensively and accelerated Soviet collapse. With the failed coup, most of the republics began to require more autonomy.

- **Weakening of the Communist Party and Loss of Legitimacy:**

The Soviet Union's Communist Party (CPSU), the bedrock of Soviet domination, lost its ability to guide. Inefficiency, corruption, and repression that characterized the party disappointed the majority of citizens. The ideological consensus on which Soviet domination had rested since the early days of the communist state was weakened by Gorbachev's reforms. The disillusionment of the public with the CPSU, combined with political liberties started by Glasnost, undermined the party's legitimacy. By the end of the 1980s, more reform-minded

factions of the Communist Party, including Yeltsin, began calling for fundamental changes within government, including a shift to democracy and market-oriented reforms. The Communist Party came into conflict with the old guard (hardline communists) and new reformers, leading to internal strife which helped bring the party down.

- ***The International Context and the End of the Cold War.***

The Cold War had placed tremendous pressure on the Soviet Union, both militarily and economically. The nuclear arms race with the United States drained Soviet resources, and the USSR struggled to keep up with the economic and technological prowess of the West. Signing of arms control treaties with the United States, like the INF Treaty (1987), marked warming up of the Cold War, but the inability of the USSR to match the economic and technological advancements of the West exposed the systemic weaknesses. The collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the revolutions in East Europe signaled the decline of Soviet dominance in the area. Democratic governments replaced Soviet rule over countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary and further reduced Soviet interest and legitimacy.

- ***The Rise of Boris Yeltsin:***

After the 1991 coup, Boris Yeltsin emerged as the strongest supporter of Russian separation from the USSR. He attracted liberal reformists and ordinary Russians who were weary of the economic crisis and political oppression under the Soviet government. Yeltsin's popularity soared as he resisted the hardliners in the coup successfully, and he started calling for the independence of Russia from the Soviet Union. On 8 December 1991, Yeltsin and the leaders of Ukraine and Belarus signed the Belavezha Accords declaring the Soviet Union dissolved and legally establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The USSR dissolved on 26 December 1991, marking the demise of the Soviet state.

- ***Economic Crises and Public Unrest:***

The Soviet Union's economic system was on the verge by the late 1980s, and Gorbachev's initiatives worsened the situation in the short term. Inflation, shortages of consumer goods, and rising unemployment only joined growing anger against the government. Protests, strikes, and demonstrations against government policy mounted, particularly in Moscow and other larger cities. The Soviet government was struggling to keep things under control, and economic slowdown offered rich grounds for a political shift. While the government was unable to provide for its people, citizens started losing faith in the Soviet regime,

and this also helped fuel the call for independence by the remaining republics.

Case Studies

These events accelerated the fall of the Soviet Union. Each of these cases will highlight the governmental failures and lack of cohesion present in the USSR that allowed it to fall. Delegates are strongly encouraged to analyze these case studies in order to learn from these events and explore potential alternate outcomes during the conference.

A) The Baltics



In 1989, the three Baltic republics initiated moves towards sovereignty. In March 1989, they boycotted elections to the Congress of People's Deputies. Throughout the year, Soviet citizens in the Baltics have been staging large-scale demonstrations and protests demanding the restoration of their independent republics. The most notable of these events was the "Baltic Way" on the 23rd of August 1989, when approximately two million people formed a human chain

across all three Soviet republics. Gorbachev's *glasnost* policies unintentionally empowered the nationalist movements in the Baltics, while Moscow continues to hesitate between appeasement and suppression.

B) The Economy

Gorbachev's *perestroika* program, launched in 1987, aimed to rehabilitate the ailing Soviet economy. Unfortunately, the program failed to deliver the economic improvements Gorbachev had hoped for. Instead, it led to administrative confusion, declining output, and worsening shortages. In 1989, discontent grew significantly. Citizens faced long queues, inflation, and rationing. Meanwhile, ministries and local authorities struggled to adapt to the changing balance of power between central and local economic control.

C) Parliamentary Elections and Internal Political Fractures

In 1989, the Soviet Union held its first parliamentary elections for the Congress of People's Deputies. It was the first partially competitive election in Soviet history. Reformers such as Boris Yeltsin won many seats and publicly criticized the Communist Party, including its control over state institutions and military involvement in politics. For the first time in Soviet history, dissident voices were broadcast on national television. The Communist Party's monopoly on power was now being openly challenged, and the **Supreme Soviet** was beginning to show signs of independent thought. This created fractures within the government between hardliners and reformers, thereby destabilizing centralized authority.

D) Eastern Europe

By November 1989, Moscow's control over the Eastern Bloc started rapidly eroding. Hungary, a Warsaw Pact member, opened its border with Austria, allowing thousands of East Germans to flee westward. In Poland, the Communist Party suffered a decisive loss in partially free elections held in June, leading to the formation of a non-communist-led government. In East Germany, mass demonstrations in Leipzig and Berlin placed immense pressure on the SED regime. Although Soviet troops remained stationed nearby, President Gorbachev has ordered that they are not to intervene, in accordance with the emerging "Sinatra Doctrine"—where each country is permitted to "do it their way."

International Actions

As of November 1989, the Soviet Union remains a global superpower. The Union is still militarily intact and diplomatically engaged but is growing increasingly isolated ideologically and economically. International actors are observing the situation in the USSR with a mix of caution, restraint, and opportunism.

The United States:

During the Bush administration, the United States has adopted a restrained but attentive approach toward the Soviet Union. The U.S. is wary of directly influencing or intervening in internal Soviet affairs, but supports arms control and is calling for further democratic reforms. Washington is also engaged in backchannel diplomacy with reformist Soviet officials. At the same time, the United States is quietly supporting reformist movements in Eastern Europe through diplomatic engagement and symbolic gestures.

Warsaw Pact Nations:

In 1989, many governments in Eastern Europe and within Soviet republics have begun asserting their autonomy and sovereignty. Support for reform is growing across the region. In Poland and Hungary, reformist governments have already taken power and publicly renounced communist doctrines. In Czechoslovakia and East Germany, large demonstrations are ongoing, although their communist governments remain in control. Soviet troops are still deployed throughout Warsaw Pact states, but President Gorbachev has signaled that they are not to intervene—an informal policy that has become known as the “Sinatra Doctrine.”

NATO and the West:

NATO has shifted from a confrontational Cold War stance to a more cooperative and diplomatic posture. The alliance is advocating for further strategic arms reduction negotiations to ease tensions and reduce the threat of conflict.

Nonetheless, NATO states are maintaining strong military readiness due to the instability in Eastern Europe. Western leaders are increasingly calling for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Germany and Poland, and are preparing for potential refugee flows and regime changes in the region.

Recommendations

- Delegates need to be well-versed in the political system and hierarchy of the USSR.
- Delegates are encouraged to research the wider issues to the stability of the USSR due to the interconnectedness of issues.
- Delegates are advised to focus on the economic reforms that would prioritize improving the main critical sectors.
- Delegates ought to be capable of understanding and examining the character of world politics before and during the emergence of the USSR.
- Delegates should explore the different facets of the conflict and come up with creative approaches to resolve the issue.
- Delegates must push forward their national interests in regard to the survival of the USSR.
- Delegates should thrive for the reformation of the Union and its survival.

Questions to consider

- What is your representative's opinion on the current insurrections?
- Is there a possibility of the USSR adopting some steps so as to overturn the economic decline in the union and its sphere of influence?
- Should Gorbachev continue to lead the USSR in the current developments and challenges to the union?
- What should be done with Gorbachev's Glasnost Policy?
- What is perestroika and how can it be used to help the Union?
- How can the presence of western and neutral countries influence the decision of hesitant Union members?

- Should the western and neutral countries have a say in the final decision, especially in the draft of Order No.1?
- Should independence be granted to countries desiring it?
- In the event of independence should the country remain part of the Union if it wishes it?

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