

# CENMUN 2019



## **UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY 1 DISARMAMENT & INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

Reviewing the effects and aftermath of  
foreign interventions in Civil Wars.

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## What are a Civil War?

A civil war is a ***war between citizens of the same country***. Civil wars are often characterised as more ***brutal conflicts with a greater number of casualties***. Civil wars have been waged for a variety of reasons, the most prevalent being ***issues with the government***. Many civil wars have been fought to ***overthrow or drastically change a sitting government***. Civil wars are also often fought to ***gain independence from a controlling government***.

## Foreign Intervention

Foreign interventions refers to the ***actions of specific countries and international governing bodies*** like the UN to ***take part in existing conflicts***. There are two kinds of foreign interventions:

1. One or more third States or an international/regional organization (the States or the organization acting through a multinational force) intervene in ***support of a state*** involved in an armed conflict ***against an organized armed group***.
2. One or more third States or an international/regional organization (the States or the organization acting through a multinational force) intervene in ***support of an organized armed group*** involved in an armed conflict ***against a State***.

## United Nations Peacekeeping Force

- The deployment of the UN Peacekeeping Force is considered as a foreign interventions but it is as the name suggests for the ***purpose of peacekeeping and maintaining peaceful conditions*** in the country.

- Since the end of the Cold War, UN troops have been *entering active conflicts often for peacemaking and to facilitate faster negotiated settlements.*
- Peacekeeping forces in the range of *approximately 10,000 troops significantly improve the likelihood of ending hostilities.*
- The UN deploys peacekeeping operations *when the permanent members of the Security Council* (China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States) *authorize troop funding, which is then subject to General Assembly approval. The UN has no standing army. Member states provide troops* for the operation on a voluntary basis.
- With substantial troop deployments, the UN can help *separate the combatants, assist with disarmament and provide a clear path for the unobstructed flow of information between sides therefore allowing the warring parties to move more quickly toward settlements.*
- The UN Peacekeeping Forces are not only able to *improve the conflict situation but also bring conflicts to a conclusion in a peaceful manner.*

## Intervention by United States of America

- The United States engaged in *forty-six military interventions from 1948-1991, from 1992-2017 that number increased fourfold to 188.*
- The deployment of U.S. armed forces to other countries is not evenly distributed and in fact it has *largely increased in terms*

*of frequency to favor the historical period following the end of the Cold War (1991).*

- From 1800–1849 there were thirty-nine interventions; forty-seven from 1850–1899; sixty-nine from 1900–1949; 111 from 1950–1999; and **126 from 2000–2017 that's a period of only seventeen years as compared to fifty years in the other periods.**
- The rate of intervention across time is not monotonic, but **jumps during the two world war periods (1917–18) as well as the Cold War (1948–91).**
- Since 1950, strong actors in asymmetric conflicts (not limited to but certainly including the United States) have **lost a majority of fights with nominally much weaker adversaries.**
- United States of America won 80 percent of their conflicts from 1850–99 but only 65 percent from 1900–49. For the last period of 1950–98, success proved hard to find. Strong actors including the United States and Soviet Union, the two so called 'superpowers' had **lost more wars than they won with losing 45 percent of the wars they fought.**

## Case Study

The **US involvement in the Vietnam War is a prime example of foreign intervention** in civil wars. Here's the timeline of the incidents which followed the entry of US into Vietnam War

- 1964 - Gulf of Tonkin incident: the **US says North Vietnamese patrol boats fire on two US Navy destroyers.** US Congress approves Gulf of Tonkin Resolution **authorising military action in region.**

- 1965 - **200,000 American combat troops** arrive in South Vietnam.
- 1966 - US troop numbers in Vietnam **rise to 400,000 then to 500,000 the following year.**
- 1968 - Tet Offensive - **a combined assault by Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese army on US positions** begins. More than **500 civilians die in the US massacre** at My Lai. Thousands are killed by communist forces during their occupation of the city of Hue.
- 1969 - Ho Chi Minh dies. President Nixon begins to **reduce US ground troops in Vietnam** as domestic public opposition to the war grows.
- 1970 - Nixon's national security advisor, Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho for the Hanoi government **start talks in Paris.**
- 1973 - Ceasefire agreement in Paris, **US troop pull-out completed by March.**
- 1975 - North Vietnamese troops invade South Vietnam and **take control of the whole country after South Vietnamese President Duong Van Minh surrenders.**
- 1994 - US lifts its **30 year trade embargo.**
- 1995 - Vietnam and US **restore full diplomatic relations.**

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