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A note from the dais:

Please note that the study guide for Greece (Topic Area A) has been authored by Mueed whereas Haris has written the study Guide for Ukraine (Topic Area B). In case you have any questions SPECIFICALLY on what is mentioned in the guide, it would be more fruitful to contact the respective committee directors. In any case, both directors will be happy to assist.

The sources for the information in the guide for Topic Area A have been cited using in text references that follow the MLA format. Therefore, if you see any group of words that does not constitute an explanation enclosed in parentheses, you should realize that these are stating which source from the bibliography list is being referenced. Please note that there is no such thing as a truly unbiased source and this information is provided to assist you in ascertaining the veracity of “facts”.

TOPIC A: The Greek Debt Crisis and European Intervention

Historical Background on Greece ("Greece"):

1. Achieved independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1830.
2. Joined NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) in 1952.
3. Country had a military dictatorship from 1967-1974.
4. Joined the EU in 1981.

Summary:

The Greek depression marked the start of the European Debt Crisis (Greece, Portugal, Ireland, Spain and Cyprus had to resort to third party assistance from various institutions, like the IMF, to either repay/refinance government debt or to bail out their indebted banks.) In the latter half of 2009, investor confidence in Greece was shattered when it was revealed that the Greek Government had misreported data about Greece's indebtedness. By 2012, the Greek Government had the largest sovereign debt default in history. (A sovereign debt default is the intended/unintended failure of a state to repay its debt in full.) This was compounded with rising unemployment and unrest in the country along with a deteriorating economic outlook for the Eurozone as a whole.

The role of the Euro:

The founding architects of the European Union commission, people like Jacque Delors and Francois Mitterrand, decided that they had to prevent another World War from happening. To do this, the European Economic Community was made. This would later evolve into the modern day European Union. The big idea was simple: if countries trade and share their institutions more, then the possibility of conflict is severely reduced. (The two individuals mentioned above and many of their fellow EU founding architects had indelible marks left on them from their experiences during the Second World War.)

Therefore the Euro was conceived in 1999 (Knight). This galvanized trading across all of Europe. An unexpected consequence of this was the more pronounced increase in labor costs in the periphery Eurozone countries, which included Greece, compared to inland Europe. Therefore, the balance of payments position of these countries was negatively impacted (Hale). (As labor costs increased, these countries' exports increased in cost as well which made other nations less inclined to purchase them when cheaper alternatives were available.) Therefore their trade deficits increased. (A trade deficit occurs when a country imports more than it exports.)

Subsequent borrowing (to get around the deficit) by Greece increased both the trade and budget deficits which peaked at around 15% of Greece's GDP in the 2008-2009 period.

Before joining the EU, investors generally viewed Greece as a high credit risk. Greece was not particularly rich. Combined with a poor government, this meant that the chances of debts being repaid by Greece were not particularly high. By joining the EU, investors felt that in case Greece was unable to pay its debts, the other Eurozone countries would bail out the country.

This led them to lend Greece money at the same rates as they lent money to Germany (a more developed nation). This influx of cheap money meant Greece borrowed a lot but when it became unable to pay back its debts, Germany and other Eurozone nations were not willing to simply bail out Greece. This led to an increase in the interest rates for Greece (Klein).

This was to coincide with the Great Recession in the US which resulted in a reduction in economic activities worldwide. As the influx of funds to Greece declined, reports in 2009 emerged that the country was being equivocal with respect to its true budget deficit. This meant that Greece was seen as a higher credit risk which led to less favorable terms (the higher interest rates) when negotiating future loans. Consequently, Greece was rendered incapable of borrowing to finance its budget deficits (Hale).

Causes:

Perhaps the most succinct summary of the causes of the debt crisis have been elucidated in the "Stability and Growth Program 2010". This was a report published by the Greek Ministry of Finance. Two main causes were identified within this document.

Firstly, the Hellenic Statistical Authority, the Greek national statistical agency, had been overly optimistic when predicting GDP growth rates. The Greek Ministry of Finance recommended rectifying this by reducing the salaries of government employees and bureaucracy (with the end goal of streamlining the processes of establishing and running a business within Greece leading to increased exports).

Secondly, from 2004-2009, government expenditures in Greece increased by an unprecedented 87% while the gross output increased in nominal terms by only 40% (the actual figure was significantly lower as nominal figures do not account for inflation). Concomitantly, tax revenues increased by only 31%. This helped strengthen the argument for the necessity of austerity measures which were imposed upon Greece in the upcoming years.

Of course, both of these issues were compounded by the dubious nature of statistics that prevailed within Greece since it had joined the EU. Eurostat (a Directorate General of the European Commission based in Luxembourg that is tasked with providing statistical information to the various institutions of the European Union) had expressed their reservations about the reliability of these figures during the 2004-2009 period.

Measures for Improvement:

By the spring of 2010, Greece was on the verge of bankruptcy. To avert this, the IMF, the European Commission and the European Central Bank (collectively nicknamed the Troika), issued the first of two international bailouts for Greece which would eventually total 264 billion dollars at today's exchange rates. (The second bailout program had to be implemented as the recession in Greece worsened in the year following the first bailout program's implementation.) However these came with conditions. Harsh austerity measures were imposed which led to greater taxes, severe budget cuts along with stipulations for ending tax evasion in the country in order to promote an atmosphere more conducive to business ("[Greece's Debt Crisis Explained](#)").

However, the money seems to be insufficient especially when unemployment is above 25% and the economy has shrunk by a quarter over the past five years. The leftist Syriza party that has recently come to power has vowed to reject further austerity measures. They, along with several other economists, believe that austerity is exacerbating the problem rather than alleviating it. In fact an internal evaluation by the IMF found that austerity measures had not restored market confidence. They had however resulted in exceptionally high unemployment and a deep recession. The Greek economy had contracted by 17% compared to the 5.5% predicted by the IMF. The IMF also predicted that unemployment would be at 15% when it had soared to above 25%.

Essentially the argument for austerity was based on the 2010 paper by Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff which found that when a country's public debt reaches 90% of their GDP, economic growth slows. This paper endorsed the adoption of austerity measures. However, a 2013 paper by Thomas Herndon, Michael Ash and Robert Polin has significantly undermined the merits of the earlier 2010 study. Therefore the effectiveness of austerity is questionable ([Covert](#)).

Along with the bailout programs, there has been a bank recapitalization program conducted by the Hellenic financial stability Fund which injected money into the 4 main Greek Banks.

Some Socio-Economic Effects ("Greece"):

1. Unemployment in Greece has risen to 27% (statistics from 2014)
2. GDP per capita has declined 24% from 22,500 Euros to 17000 Euros.
3. More than 40% of the Greek population are currently living below the poverty line.
4. 20% of the shops in the city centre of Athens are now empty.

Some Possible Solutions:

- a) **Exiting the European Union (Grexit):** This solution was proposed by Paul Krugman, a Noble Prize winning economist. The main benefit of this would be a new national currency for Greece. The adoption of the Euro prevents Greece from allowing its currency to depreciate on its own. Depreciation would encourage investment and allow Greece to repay its debt in cheaper currency. This would also prevent a reduction in employee wages in order for exports to remain competitive and thus improve the debt to GDP ratio of Greece which is currently around 175%.

The Problems with this approach are numerous. Firstly, exiting the European Union would result in a shift in the political balance in the region and Greece may be inclined to form closer ties with Russia, angering its other EU members.

This would also establish a dangerous precedent for the European Union as a whole. Once membership is seen as revocable, other indebted European countries will have greater bargaining power when negotiating for debt relief.

Moreover, the Euro will depreciate further (particularly with respect to the dollar) due to decreased demand for the currency. Therefore European import expenditures will increase especially with respect to the United States, a key trading partner. The US exported 262 billion dollars' worth of goods to the EU in 2013 alone.

- b) **Further bailout negotiations:** Greece may attempt to receive additional bailout funds in return for further privatization of government assets, increased taxes etcetera.



- c) **An overarching European institution for managing budget deficits:** The economist Thomas Piketty has suggested establishing a European institution for budget deficit management to not only help mitigate the crisis in Greece but also assist other European nations cope with their debts. The sheer magnitude of work such an institution will have to carry out is daunting to say the least.

An interesting point Piketty made in his interview with The Wire is the apparent hypocrisy of Germany when repaying debts. According to Piketty, Germany has never repaid its external debts, neither after the First nor the Second World War. However, it has been quite eager to make other countries pay up such as after the Franco Prussian war of 1870. (The reparations Germany received from France caused the French state to suffer for decades)

- d) **Learning from the Wirtschaftswunder:** The Wirtschaftswunder (German for Economic Miracle) refers to the economic turnaround pulled off by the Germans after the Second World War. Within 10 years, the Germans had reduced their debt from 200% of the GDP to 20% of the GDP. This had been accomplished by reducing money supply in the economy, eliminating price controls and reducing the tax rates which incentivized the workforce to be more productive.

Some questions that a resolution should address:

1. What can be taken away from the Greek Debt Crisis to help prevent such a situation from arising in the Eurozone in the future?
2. How can the statistical reliability of figures from Eurozone countries be checked/improved?
3. Should austerity measures be imposed upon Greece? Are these effective at all?
4. How should bailout terms in Greece be negotiated?
5. Are the current bailout terms satisfactory?
6. Is withdrawal from the Eurozone an option for Greece? Should the European Parliament allow this?
7. What is the most viable/beneficial method for resolving the crisis?

Useful: Eurostat's database can provide various figures related to the current situation in Greece. Citing these when framing your arguments can help strengthen the point you are making. This is a rather comprehensive database. Delegates are welcome to cite figures from other reputable sources.



Works Cited:

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2. "Greece." *The CIA World Factbook*. Central intelligence Agency, n.d. Web. 24 July 2015.
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7. Zeit, Die. "Thomas Piketty: 'Germany Has Never Repaid its Debts. It Has No Right to Lecture Greece'." *The Wire*. N.p., 8 July 2015. Web. 25 July 2015.
<<http://thewire.in/2015/07/08/thomas-piketty-germany-has-never-repaid-its-debts-it-has-no-right-to-lecture-greece-5851/>>.

Topic B: Crisis In Ukraine

It is advised that all delegates first use this timeline to familiarise themselves in regards to all concepts regarding the crisis:

<http://csis.org/ukraine/index.htm>

1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND PAST RESOLUTIONS

Ukraine is located in the Eastern part of Europe bordering Belarus, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia and Slovakia, with a population of approximately 44.3 million people (45.4 million including Crimea). Territorially it is the largest country in Europe. After the collapse of the Soviet Union it has maintained close economic ties with Russia, and Ukrainian exports to Russia amounted to USD 15.8 billion in 2013. It provides approximately 5% of Russia's total imports – the largest share amongst the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the fourth largest overall. Ukraine is also a transit state for Russian gas being delivered to Europe. Russia's Black Sea Fleet, one of five divisions of the Russian Navy, is based in Sevastopol, Crimea. Ukraine has historically been divided into Eastern and Western parts, which differ greatly in ethnic compositions, political orientations and identity. Thus, the Eastern part of the country has a Russian-speaking majority, whilst the Western part consists of Polish, Moldovan and Hungarian speakers and other national minorities, all within the stronger Ukrainian identity. This divide has played a significant role in several domestic issues, including the strengthening of the Ukrainian language, which has been taking place since the breakup of the Soviet Union and has further divided the two regions of the country. This divide has been especially apparent since a proWestern government came to power in 2005, which was widely contested in the Eastern part. The divide is at the very root of the current conflict. Ukraine gained independence on the August 24, 1991. It maintained very close ties to Russia until 2004, when the term of the second Ukrainian president, Leonid Kuchma, expired. The subsequent first round of presidential elections led to two candidates, Viktor Yushchenko, known for his proWestern attitude, and Victor Yanukovich, who intended to maintain and develop close ties with Russia.

For more information please see the CIA World Factbook

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/theWorldfactbook/geos/up.html>

The Economic Implications of Ukraine-Russia Trade Relations, CEIC, July 8, 2014

<http://www.ceicdata.com/en/blog/economic-implications-ukraine-russia-trade-relations#sthash.Ey31zlrM.dpuf>

An ethnic history of Ukraine. Source: Minority Rights Group

<http://www.minorityrights.org/5053/ukraine/ukraine-overview.html>

Subsequently, the fact that Yanukovich was leading in the polls of the second round of elections in November 2014, caused protests in the country. The events led to election re-runs and the victory of the pro-Western candidate Yushchenko (2005-10). After his turbulent term expired in 2010, the pro-Russian candidate Yanukovich took office and pledged to maintain pro-Western commitments made by the previous president (2010-14). Recent events started in November 2013 when, under significant pressure from Russia, the Ukrainian president abandoned further cooperation with the European Union (EU) by refusing to sign an EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, which would have guaranteed a free-trade zone and potentially a trade corridor for Russia. The protests in Maidan Nesalezhnosti (Independence Square) in Kiev escalated to a full-scale revolution. Russia condemned the protesters as fascists and neo-nazis, whilst the European Parliament and the US government issued their support to the Euromaidan wave of demonstrations and unrest and its struggle against the Yanukovich government. In February 2014, 77 people were shot in Independence Square, which led to the president stepping down and fleeing to Russia, even though a government-opposition agreement was concluded shortly before.

Full timeline of the Orange Revolution.

Source: Deutsche Welle http://www.dw.de/chronology-of-the-orangerevolution/a-2804808_9

A short timeline of the country in the 20th-21st centuries can be viewed here:

http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18010123_10

Ukraine's revolution and the far right, BBC, 07.03.2014

http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26468720_11

European Parliament voiced support for Euromaidan, Interfax-Ukraine, 11.12.2013

http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/european-parliament-voiced-support-for-euromaidan-333445.html_12

Statement from John Kerry

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/11/world/europe/kerrys-statement-onukraine.html?_r=1&

Events intensified in March 2014, when the “Little Green Men”, soldiers of an unknown origin (presumably, Russian), entered the Crimean Peninsula and helped local separatist forces take power in the region, and conducted a referendum on its political status. This referendum resulted in the annexation of the Crimean Republic by Russia. This was deemed illegitimate by the Ukrainian government and the international community, as it broke the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 between the USA, the UK, Ukraine and Russia, guaranteeing the territorial integrity of Ukraine. It was at this point that the EU and the USA first imposed economic sanctions on Russia. The success of the separatist movement in Crimea inspired separatists in two other regions, those of Donetsk and Luhansk respectively, to move forward with their own agendas. This caused an outbreak of military conflict on the Russian border, and when a businessman, Petro Poroshenko, won the presidential election of May 2014, who was overwhelmingly supported by the USA and the EU, military action intensified in these breakaway regions. Furthermore, the crash of the commercial airliner MH17 over the Donetsk region, in

which 298 passengers were killed, drew the full attention of the UN and the international community, and subsequently led to further sanctions being imposed upon Russia. The UN General Assembly and Security Council addressed the issue of the Ukrainian crisis on multiple occasions in 2014. The General Assembly adopted a resolution calling upon its Member States not to recognize any alterations to the status of Crimea (A/RES/68/262)¹⁷. The UNSC, although discussing the various issue of the conflict, restricted itself to solely adopting a resolution condemning the shooting down of MH17 (S/RES/2166 (2014))¹⁸ in several press-statements, as the draft resolution on the situation in Crimea was vetoed by the representative of the Russian Federation.

BREAKAWAY REGIONS OF DONETSK AND LUHANSK

The situation in the Eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk bordering Russia started to develop in the beginning of April 2014, when protesters, commonly named by the media as pro-Russian separatists, occupied government buildings in Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv (with the latter not as violent as the other two). Protesters, inspired by events in Crimea, demanded independence. Vitaly Shevchenko, BBC Monitoring, 11.03.2014

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26532154> 14

See the text of the Memorandum here:

<http://www.cfr.org/arms-control-disarmament-andnonproliferation/budapest-memorandums-security-assurances-1994/p32484> 15

Timeline of the Sanctions imposed on Russia during the Ukrainian Conflict

<http://www.cctv-america.com/timelineus-eu-sanctions-against-russia>

A list of the UNSC records on the Ukrainian Conflict. Source: Security Council Report

<http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/ukraine>

Text of the Resolution A/RES/68/262

http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/262 18

Text of the Resolution S/RES/2166 (2014)

http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2166

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/world/europe/russia-vetoes-un-resolution-on-crimea.html> 20

See full timeline of the events at the Foreign Policy Research Institute Geopoliticus Blog:

<http://www.fpri.org/geopoliticus/2014/07/ukraine-crisis-timeline-talk-peace-acts-war>

referenda and the protection of Russia. In May, the separatist groups established themselves as the governments of 'Donetsk People's Republic' and 'Luhansk People's Republic'. These newly formed

governments held referenda, declared their independence and applied to join Russia. The applications were never acknowledged by the Russian Parliament nor addressed by the government. The Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, did, however, admit to providing assistance to the separatists. In May 2014, the newly elected Ukrainian president, Petro Poroshenko, established military operations in these regions, including the seizure of the airport in Donetsk, leading to heavy casualties on both sides. Throughout May and June, separatist groups expanded their territories, and occupied two strategic military bases in the Luhansk region and shot down several Ukrainian military planes. On June 27th, an EU-Ukraine Association Agreement was signed, which caused dissatisfaction from the Pro-Russian side and led to a violation of the ceasefire adopted previously. In July, however, the Ukrainian government soldiers regained territories and military bases. The separatists retaliated by stepping up their efforts in shooting down several military planes. On July 17th, the separatists shot down the commercial airliner MH17, flying from Amsterdam to Kuala-Lumpur, with 298 people on board. The plane was shot down using Soviet-era equipment, making it difficult to establish its source. According to the preliminary investigation, the plane was shot down by mistake and there was no direct evidence of Russia's involvement. This incident drew the full attention of the international community to the situation in the breakaway regions and led to further sanctions against Russia from the USA and the EU. On the October 24, 2014 during a UNSC meeting, the Assistant Secretary General on Human Rights, Ivan Šimonović, informed the Council that the death toll during the conflict had reached 3700 people, which represented a notable increase since the previous report released by the United Nations in August (2200 victims). By November 14th, the death toll had reached more than 4100 people, with more than 9000 people wounded and around a million people displaced. In October 2014, Mr Šimonović stated that the current peace arrangements were moving too slowly and encouraged the Security Council to "to work more urgently towards durable peace"

The current crisis is fast becoming the biggest geopolitical threat in Europe since the breakup of Yugoslavia. It is not definitively known whether the Ukrainian conflict can be considered as an international conflict, as Russia has not officially taken any responsibility for any major military involvement, nor any other actions as alleged by the international community. However, the geopolitical importance of the country, and Russian interest in Ukraine, has turned the country into a battleground between Russia and NATO. The tensions started with the annexation of Crimea by Russia and the appearance of the 'green people', the soldiers in unmarked uniforms that helped the separatists seize power in the first place. Their presence increased further with continued military operations in the two breakaway regions of Donetsk and Luhansk and multiple exercises by the Russian Army near the southern borders in the summer of 2014. NATO conducted military training in September in the Lviv Region in the Western part of Ukraine (Operation Rapid Trident) at the same time that peace talks took place in Minsk. Russia, allegedly, sent its soldiers to fight on the side of the separatists in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as initiating five humanitarian aid convoys (as of the beginning of November 2014), which were initially regarded as an undercover invasion of Ukraine. Events escalated further in November 2014, when the Ukrainian government sent military troops to protect the occupied cities. According to NATO, Russia has moved its troops to the separatist-occupied territories. The Russian Government has however denied this action. This action has increased tensions further and is reminiscent of cold war proxy wars. Analysts say that Russia's main long-term goal has been to re-establish itself in the former Soviet space and as a global power. Supported by state propaganda, in the summer of 2014, government approval ratings reached 87%. NATO is expanding eastward and, after the

accession of the Baltic States and Poland, is now currently bordering Russia. Russia is not invited to G8 summits, which deprives the leaders of a platform to discuss issues and is reminiscent of a cold war attitude. If further escalation occurs, the events may lead to a wider hot conflict between the two sides. The atmosphere escalated further when several Russian military planes were discovered by radar equipment in different parts of the EU, from the Baltic States all the way to the UK. In addition to this, the Ukrainian President alleged that President Putin stated in a private telephone conversation that if he wanted to, “Russian troops could, in two days, be not only in Kiev but also in Riga, Vilnius, Tallinn, Warsaw, and Bucharest” . Considering the fact that all interested parties have nuclear arsenals at their disposal, the international community is doing its best to ensure the conflict does not escalate further, particularly to a level of interstate war.

ENDING THE CONFLICT

The UN, EU, and Ukraine have stated on multiple occasions, that there is “no military solution” to the conflict. There are indeed several possible outcomes to the conflict, all of them, however, requiring military de-escalation in Donetsk and the withdrawal of Russian troops from the region. The first solution would be that the breakaway regions remain part of Ukraine and leaving the country’s territorial integrity intact. They will however gain a greater autonomous status. Some also suggest that Ukraine could change its constitution and obtain a neutral status based on a Finnish or Austrian model.

The Boisto group, consisting of “American and Russian experts and former officials—including an ex-director of Russia’s Foreign Intelligence Service and a top Russia advisor to George W. Bush” met in Finland in August and produced a 24-step plan to resolve the conflict⁴⁴. The plan includes establishing a ceasefire by ensuring the retreat of both Ukrainian and Russian military forces, establishing a UN peacekeeping operation, and demilitarization amongst other things. The governments involved however, have not considered this plan. At the end of September 2014, the presidents of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, the Chancellor of Germany as well as the representatives of the self-proclaimed governments of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions gathered in Minsk, Belarus, for peace talks. President Poroshenko has claimed that these were “tough” talks, but no substantial long-term agreement was reached. The parties agreed to establish a 30-km buffer zone and a ceasefire, which was violated multiple times soon afterwards. The leaders of Ukraine, Russia and members of the European Council (the heads of the EU governments) met in Milan in October 2014 to discuss the situation with regards to the security of the gas supply to Ukraine and to the EU. The gas situation stabilized, however the conflict remains unresolved. Meetings between the president of Russia and the heads of the EU Member States were held during the G20 Summit in November 2014. However, no further significant progress has been made. The EU has warned Russia of further sanctions.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What actions will the EP take to settle the dispute in Ukraine?
2. Will the international community accept the annexation of Crimea?
3. What international and regional action will be taken to deal with separatist forces in eastern Ukraine?
4. How can the EP ensure that there is no international interference in the Ukrainian conflict?
5. How can a sustainable ceasefire be achieved?



6. What incentives could be given to the parties involved to stop the conflict?
7. Is the use of force by any of the parties involved appropriate?
8. Should a Peacekeeping force be deployed to the region?
9. Are international sanctions on Russia justified?
10. How can the tensions in Ukraine be effectively reduced?
11. What economic actions might be taken to alleviate hardship?

