



Crisis Simulation

JCC: Nigerian Civil War - Nigerian Government

Anna Kim and Luna Forlano
Co-Chairs



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Letter from the Chairs

Dear Delegates and Sponsors,

Welcome to GSMUN XXVI Nigerian Civil War - Nigerian Government JCC Committee! Your chairs, Luna Forlano and Anna Kim, are so excited to meet all of you. As delegates in the Nigerian Government Crisis Committee you will need to solve the upcoming issue of the Nigerian Civil War. With clashing ethnic groups, and areas of Nigeria breaking apart, as delegates you must decide whether peace or war is the answer.

Luna is ecstatic to be participating in her third year of the GSMUN team! She can not wait for the conference, and to meet all the delegates! Outside of Model UN, Luna enjoys all things music and spending time outside. She is a part of numerous clubs at Maggie Walker including Spanish and Italian Club, the Jabberwock, and is also a co-president of the school's acapella group. Luna is so excited for an amazing GSMUN!!

Anna Kim, a junior at Maggie Walker, is thrilled to be a chair for the Nigerian Civil War - Nigerian Government committee! She has been involved with Model UN since freshman year and can't wait for GSMUN XXVI and everything it brings. Outside of Model UN, Anna spends her time playing tennis in and out of school, being part of the orchestra, rock climbing with friends, and more! She can not wait to meet all of the delegates and is excited for a fun committee!

Within this committee, you will be tackling the topics of whether or not the Nigerian Government will be able to secure unity amongst the nation, and the extent to which foreign nations will be able to intervene with the conflict. It is important to research and understand the issues that led to the split of the nation and the state at which Biafra is in after they declared independence from the Nigerian Government. For your position paper, you are expected to use Chicago Manual Style citations, Times New Roman font 12-point, and double spacing. You are required to follow the Maggie Walker honor code. Plagiarism will not be tolerated on any level. Please send your position papers by email to gsmunxxvi.nigeria@gmail.com before 5pm on conference day.

Additionally, our amazing charity this year is Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. There will be snacks, T-shirts, incentives, and more to raise donations for this charity. Be sure to bring cash in order to participate in helping this cause!! Not only will you get to debate interesting topics, but also make a difference in our community!!

Your Chairs,

Anna Kim
gsmunxxvi.nigeria@gmail.com

Luna Forlano

JCC: Nigerian Civil War - Nigerian Government *Committee Overview*

Topic I: Securing Unity **History of the Issue**

On October 1, 1960, Nigeria officially became an independent nation, free from colonization.¹ With a relatively smooth transition and a population of over 56 million people from 20 tribes, there was promising potential for the strengthening of the nation. Nigeria had an active parliament with a thriving economy based on cocoa and palm oil. The country was segmented into three distinct regions: north, east, and west.² The Hausa Fulani people controlled the north, the Igbo people controlled the east, and the Yoruba people controlled the west. Each geographical region contributed a political party, mainly based on their ethnic composition, into the national Federation. With the north dominating seventy-five percent of the country's land area and making up sixty percent of the country's population, there was a major power imbalance and arguments ignited.³ Regional stresses, including ethnic competition and economic imbalances, conquered Nigeria, resulting in overthrow attempts, power struggles, and military issues, which soon escalated into greater conflict within Nigeria.

One of the first hints of trouble was the 1962 census. This census proved to be only the start of government mistrust in Nigeria. The census covered the entire country and took place in May of 1960. A large amount of public attention surrounded it because of the government continuing to stress the importance of the census. The census soon turned into a political, rather than statistical, affair. The results of the census, especially regarding population proportions, were fervently debated within the three

regional sections in the Federation. In 1963, a recount occurred due to the mass hysteria, but some still believe that due to the rushed process, it was inaccurate.⁴

In 1964, the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) held an election that caused upheaval in Nigeria. This election spurred the fragile creation of two new political parties: the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) and the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). The UPGA was controlled primarily by the Eastern region and the NNA in the northern region. A two-party system was delicately introduced into Nigeria. The Parliament dissolved, and the two parties quickly developed campaigns for upcoming elections. Campaigns, instead of being based on democratic values, became entrenched with threats and accusations, again threatening national unity. The party winner of the 1964 election, according to the results, was the NNA. The results produced from the election directly countered facts and expectations of the people.⁵

On January 15, 1966 a coup led by Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, a Igbo nation officer, amplified the flaws in the governmental system, leading to the death of many northern officers. The leaders of the coup quickly seized power. However, a counter-coup led by Aguiyi-Ironsi, who imposed a unitary style of government, soon occurred. After that, in July 1966, Yakubu Gowon, Ironsi's chief of staff, became head of state following another revenge coup, resulting in the killing of Aguiyi-Ironsi and many other Igbo leaders.⁶ From here, northern soldiers and northern civilians began to systematically kill Igbo people. In September 1966, the pogrom continued with

thirty thousand Eastern Nigerians dying at the hands of their Northern brethren.⁷

As a new leader, Gowon attempted to solve the ethnic tensions occurring in Nigeria, but struggled to find a long-lasting peace. For his final attempt to solve the growing conflict, he declared a state of emergency and split Nigeria's regions into twelve states. Soon following, on May 30, 1967, the Eastern region declared itself an independent state under the name Biafra, led by Lieutenant Colonel Chukumeka Odumegwu Ojukwu. Division and separation are growing at an exponential rate in Nigeria.⁸

Current Status of the Issue

With Biafra claiming independence, the government of Nigeria must find a way to ensure unity and prevent Biafra from success. Biafra seceded from Nigeria due to disagreements between Northern and Eastern Nigeria regarding human rights and privileges. Under the federation system of government the Eastern region felt underrepresented due to the northern dominance. Due to population shifts and high amounts of violence, Easterners no longer felt safe to live within the confinements of Nigeria. The massacres and unwelcomeness pushed for the development of the secession of Biafra.⁹

The regional, rather than national, focus regarding the two most formative political parties in Nigeria, created ruptures in the governmental system. This impending division was long awaited, but Nigeria faces issues on how to deal with the conflict and prevent the secession of Biafra. Threats of war and violence are not uncommon, and the unity of Nigeria is becoming increasingly important to prevent the outbreak of war.

Ojukwu is often visiting UNN, one of the few south-eastern universities, and is preparing the students for succession and conflict.¹⁰ With a strong leader like Ojukwu, the Nigerian government is finding the challenge of unity increasingly difficult. Tensions between Biafra and the Nigerian government are high, and it is the job of this

committee to solve the current crisis, or else danger could be in store for more than Nigeria.

Analysis and Solutions

There have been multiple attempts to solve the issues of division and separation in Nigeria, but little attempts have been successful. On August 9, 1966 military governor representatives came together in Lagos to brainstorm solutions, yet once compromises were reached there was no form of implementation. In September, 1966 the *Ad Hoc* Constitutional Conference delegates who represented all parts of the Federation met to create an association that would best suit Nigeria's needs.¹¹ However, this conference was dismissed by the current head of the Lagos government. It became increasingly difficult for the Supreme Military Council to meet in Nigeria since all Military Governors could not agree on a suitable location.

Finally in January 1967, the council met in Aburi, Ghana to discuss the fate of Nigeria. The meeting was extremely unsuccessful since the Lagos government would not implement the Aburi accords. Additionally, all decisions adopted by the Lagos government were without any response from the East.¹² The failure of Gowon's regime became clear in his inability to implement the Aburi accords.

Lieutenant Colonel Gowon was continuously pressured to give reparations, mainly by Ojukwu, to the Eastern region of Nigeria in compensation for the pogrom and massacre they faced in 1966. He refused to do so, leading some to believe he hoped Eastern Nigeria would fall into economic collapse.

With Biafra's announcement of succession comes multiple threats. Western leader Chief Awolowo declared he would soon follow. Biafra will have difficulty managing their minority groups and rebellious internal threats.¹³ If Nigeria is successful in preventing the secession of Biafra and future conflict, major changes will have to occur in its

governmental structure in order to maintain long term peace and prosperity. If peaceful meetings have not worked in the past, there is debate whether they will work in the future, and if conflict can not be avoided. Although, it is our duty in the United Nations to ensure peace and prosperity for all and confidently find a successful solution to the issues of division in Nigeria.

Questions to Consider

1. How can the Nigerian government keep unity in their country and respond to Biafra's claim of independence?
2. What structure of government will unite the dividing regions of Nigeria?
3. What are the flaws in the current system of government?
4. How can you ensure unity in the long term, and not just the moment at hand?
5. Why have peacemaking attempts failed in the past?

Further Research

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-af-rica-51094093>: Interesting first person account of events during and before the war.
2. <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/e5/c15646.htm>: Good primary sources regarding the conflict.
3. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nigerian-civil-war>: An overview of the lead-up and impact of the war.
4. https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Nigerian_Civil_War: Another detailed overview of the issue.

Topic II: International Relations

Regarding the Conflict

History of the Issue

Up until 1960, the British held control over Nigeria, exploiting the country by obtaining their resources such as cocoa, palm oil, and rubber.¹⁴ After Nigeria gained

independence from Britain and conflict arose within the regions of the country, other foreign nations including France, the Soviet Union, and other African countries became involved by providing weapons and supplies to Nigeria, and showing support to either side of the conflict.¹⁵

During British colonization, Nigeria was not only economically exploited but also socially modified through modifications in government, education, and religion. The British implemented indirect rule into the local government of Nigeria, putting the power into the hands of European officers who served as Governor-Generals of Nigeria. Regarding education, the British implemented Western teachings and the English language. The most prominent change the British instilled in Nigeria was through Christianity. The British divided Nigeria into different groups to keep under control and ensured their separation.¹⁶ With the new social bearings from the British developing in the different regions at varying rates, the pre-existing religious and social disputes between the regions of Nigeria were heightened.

While the British mostly sided with the Nigerian government, the French sided with Biafra. Even though the French did not recognize Biafra as a sovereign nation, they continued to provide aid, weapons, and mercenaries. The French was incentivized to participate via the creation of oil drilling contracts for the *Société Anonyme Française de Recherches et d'Exploitation de Pétrolières* (SAFRAP) with Nigeria.¹⁷

As the Cold War continued, foreign superpowers formed rivalries that manifested itself into involvement within Nigeria. The Soviet Union and the United States wished to spread their ideologies by competing for influence over newly independent countries including Nigeria. The Soviet Union supported the Nigerian government as they respected their goals to maintain unity within their country. They continued to provide assistance and air supplies to Nigeria, sparking

diplomatic relations between the two nations.¹⁸ On the other hand, the United States also valued their economic ties to the Nigerian government, but the public support emphasized Biafra. Although President Lyndon B. Johnson attempted to stay neutral, the overwhelming voice of the public pushed the United States in support of Biafra.¹⁹

Additional foreign countries including Israel, Egypt, and Tanzania were also involved in the conflict. As a nation also recently freed from colonial rule, Israel shared a sense of nationalism with Nigeria, fostering diplomatic relations. During the war, Israel provided military and agricultural assistance to the Nigerian government to further strengthen their ties.²⁰ The Organization of African Unity (OAU), created in the 1960s to promote the development of all of the newly independent African nations, showed overwhelming support for the Nigerian government and its attempts to preserve unity.²¹ However, other African countries like Tanzania and Gabon showed support for Biafra.

Current Status of the Issue

With foreign involvement, issues such as sovereignty concerns, humanitarian crises, and diplomatic tensions can arise. As Nigeria has just stepped away from British control, working with powerful foreign nations could lead to questions regarding the sovereignty of Nigeria. Particularly since the Biafra situation is an internal issue, external help may not be appreciated and could actually lead to worsening consequences. Disputes between outside nations may affect and possibly further escalate the issues occurring within Nigeria, creating more instability within an already unstable and ununified nation.

Through the copious amount of military aid and supplies issued by these foreign nations, advancement of troops and violent outbreaks are bound to occur. Through these outbreaks of violence, the humanitarian struggles within Nigeria will worsen, leading to more lives lost, more citizens displaced, and more human rights

violated. Furthermore, as many of the relations between Nigeria and foreign nations strengthen, others are weakening, threatening the weak stability Nigeria currently has. Additionally, there is also the threat that many of these outside nations may just see Nigeria as another economical investment, intending to further exploit the nation's rich resources.

Analysis and Solutions

The extent of foreign involvement in the Nigerian Civil War must be reviewed in order to create an optimal environment for the Nigerian government to function. Involvement from these foreign powers can be limited to ensure that sovereignty, humanitarianism, and diplomacy are sustained within Nigeria. With too much foreign involvement, Nigeria may be heavily influenced and the conflict may extend to nations outside of the country. To prevent further issues from arising within the conflict of achieving unity, foreign involvement must be regulated and addressed.

The OAU also has a voice in protecting the development of Nigeria as a newly independent nation, and in support of the Nigerian government's aspirations for unity. Created to mediate and resolve conflicts among nations, such as the Morocco-Mauritania Border Conflict, the OAU often interlinks to further mediate conflicts. The OAU also strives for political unity, decolonization, economic stability and cooperation, nation security, and shows solidarity and support for all African nations.²² With the resources and authority held by the OAU, it is crucial to think about how it can work to resolve the conflict at hand.

Questions to Consider:

1. How does foreign involvement affect both the Nigerian government and Biafra?
2. Can unity be preserved within Nigeria with foreign involvement? To what extent of foreign involvement?

3. Does foreign involvement give either the Nigerian government or Biafra an upper hand?
4. What specific humanitarian crises or diplomatic tensions have occurred because of foreign involvement?
5. What are the intentions of each foreign nation when becoming involved in the Nigerian Civil War?

Further Research

1. <https://www.thecollector.com/nigeria-n-civil-war-foreign-intervention/>: General overview of why foreign nations wanted to be involved with Nigeria.

2. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23311983.2023.2264020>: See how Nigeria was affected by these foreign nations during and before the war.
3. <https://www.usaid.gov/african-union/history#:~:text=The%20OAU%27s%20main%20objectives%2C%20as,States%3B%20rid%20the%20continent%20of>: Overview of the Organization of African Unity.
4. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40206616>: In depth overview of why foreign nations were interested in Nigeria.

Endnotes

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4. Abraham Okolo, "The Nigerian Census: Problems and Prospects," *The American Statistician* 53, no. 4 (1999): 321–25, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2686050>.
5. Douglas G. Anglin, "Brinkmanship in Nigeria: The Federal Elections of 1964-65," *International Journal* 20, no. 2 (1965): 173–88, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40199517>.
6. Kolawole Olaniyan, "Biafra/Nigeria, " In *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, edited by Dinah L. Shelton, 121-124. Vol. 1. Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. *Gale In Context: World History* (accessed February 4, 2024), <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3434600053/WHIC?u=rich82127&sid=bookmark-WHIC&xid=672e7595>.
7. Stephen Vincent, "Should Biafra Survive?" *Transition*, no. 32 (1967): 53–57, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2934626>.
8. Kirk-Greene.
9. "Biafra: Proclamation of the Republic of Biafra," *International Legal Materials* 6, no. 4 (1967): 665–80, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20690240>.
10. Adaobi Tricia Nwaubani, "Remembering Nigeria's Biafra War That Many Prefer to Forget, " BBC, Last modified January 14, 2020, Accessed February 5, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-51094093>.
11. Vincent, 57.
12. Baptiste, F. A. "Constitutional Conflict in Nigeria: Aburi and After." *The World Today* 23, no. 7 (1967): 301–8. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40394000>.
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16. Eyeh, Emmanuel T. "The roles and consequences of foreign involvement in Nigeria's internal violent conflicts." *Taylor & Francis Online*, 18 Oct. 2023, www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23311983.2023.2264020. Accessed 6 Feb. 2024.
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