

KNIGHTMUN XXI



November 4th - 6th, 2022

Hello Delegates!

Welcome to the Iranian Hostage Crisis, 1979 committee here at KnightMUN XXI! My name is Catalina and I will be your chair for this committee which I cannot be more excited for. I am a freshman from Orlando, studying International relations and this is my 4th year of doing MUN. I started my Model U.N. journey at Knight MUN in 2019 during my sophomore year and this is my first year as a part of the KnightMUN team. This is my third-time chairing at a conference, but first time in person so I will do my best.

I am a big politics and history nerd myself and I look forward towards the debate, and I will make sure that the debate does not go too far. However, I worked nightly with the Executive Board about the topic of the Iranian hostage crisis, which I felt is an important historical event to discuss in today's world political climate. Do not be afraid to speak during committee because, I would like to see all delegates contributing to directives being written and voices being heard. Therefore I am pleased to welcome all delegates to the IRANIAN HOSTAGE CRISIS, 1979 SPECIALIZED COMMITTEE, there are opportunities for ever delegate to compete and succeed at KnightMUN. Every member a part of KnightMUN XXI have worked so hard for the committee, ready to take on the challenge it is of hosting our own conference. I am honored to have you join us in Orlando and are looking forward to the creativity and diplomacy you delegates bring to the table. If you have any

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questions or concerns of any regard, please feel free to contact me so we resolve whatever it is you are curious about. I want to wish the best of luck of all the delegates and I cannot wait to see you in UCF.

Sincerely Your Chair,

Catalina Binciella (she/her)

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Committee History

Iranian-American relations

The poor diplomatic relations between the United States and the Republic of Iran did not always be this way. Since 1977, the United States and Iran enjoyed a friendly diplomatic relationship with President Jimmy Carter being the center of this peace-building relationship¹. As both countries benefited one another in regards to oil and how close they both were in terms of trading agreements. The United States and Iran had been especially close until 1951, when Iranian Prime Minister, Mohammad Mosaddegh, led a strike against Britain's Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) to get a share of the company's profits and to limit the control over Iran's oil reserves and to nationalize Iran's oil industry. However, AIOC withdrew from Iran's government's attempts to nationalize their oil, so Iran's parliament (Majlis) voted to expel any foreign oil companies from the Persian Gulf region which included the British government; yet their attempts were in vain by the middle of 1952 when the International Court of Justice intervened and rejected Iran's attempt of nationalization and the Shah replaced Mosaddegh.

The Shah

The Shah or known as Mohammad Reza Pahlavi rose to power after overthrowing Mosaddegh during the "White Revolution" with assistance from the United States⁴. Although the "White Revolution" benefitted Iranians with: profit-sharing industrial workers, nationalization of forests and pastures, land reform, amendment to electoral law

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for more representation, and the establishment of a Literary Corps for those in the military. However, not long after the White Revolution Iranians became unhappy with Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, especially after he declared himself as a Shah, spending excessive amounts of mysterious deaths and executions, and unfair rulings. In the end, the breaking point of the Iranians public displeasure was when the Shah was the unequal distribution of oil and wealth alongside how he forced westernization and allowed secret CIA missions to take place in the nation.

Iranian Revolution (1978-1979) & Ayatollah Khomeini

Khomeini returned to Iran on February 1, 1979 after protests and riots from the Iranian Revolution that collapsed the government and led the Shah to fled into exile, but Khomeini would eventually soon after become the head of the Iranian government and establish Iran as an Islamic Republic. The Ayatollah publicly opposed any relations with the United States due to past diplomatic actions with the nation. After all of his speeches throughout 1979 it led the Iranian people to physical action by rioting, looting American businesses in the country, and protesting outside of the American Embassy in Tehran. Actions finally reached a boiling on November 4, 1979.

State of the Committee

All delegates would follow the aftermath of the kidnapping of 52 American diplomats that took place on November 4, 1979: when Iranian college students overwhelmed and seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, Iran. This is a specialized committee so this committee will be leaning towards the General Assembly with elements of a crisis committee, such as instead of resolutions directives will be written instead and crisis notes will not be required. It is preferred by the chairs for all delegates to act accordingly and behave respectfully towards those who they are representing.

The Beginning of the Iranian Hostage Crisis

As the crisis began, during the Iranian Revolution, once Iranian students were angered by American support for the Shah, who fled into exile in January 1979 to the United States for cancer treatment. These Iranian college students pled to the United States to release the Shah back to Iran, so that he could stand in court against numerous allegations of corruption and executions. However, once the students did not receive word that the Shah would return back to Teran then placed all of their anger towards the U.S. Embassy stationed in Teran. Over a period of several weeks, crowds of Iranians circled the U.S. Embassy while chanting "Marg bar Amrika/Death to America" and became violent during several instances. Even during one instance, October 24, 1979, Ayatollah Khalkhali joined these protests outside of the U.S. Embassy and warned "the U.S. Government not to give him permanent residence. If it does, the consequences for the internal situation in the United States will be quite adverse." It was not until November 4, 1979 that these crowds

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eventually climbed the fence, stormed the grounds of the U.S. Embassy, and locked all of the doors inside the main diplomatic headquarters: essentially holding those inside the building captive. The day after the events that transpired on November 4th, the Ayatollah would support the students' action of taking the Embassy by sending his son to represent him, as being sent by the request of the students.

However, it was not until January 28, 1980 when Canadian diplomats rescued 6 American diplomats and on November 17, 1979 when the Ayatollah allowed the release of 13 hostages (both women and African Americans) on the grounds that he considered them as not spies (since they had lower ranking occupations in the U.S. Embassy). Later there would be an attempt to rescue the American hostages by the United States that ultimately failed on April 24 1979, when a small team was sent to rescue the hostages but while over Iranian airspace two of the eight helicopters malfunctioned and crashed that killed 8 U.S. service men. Ultimately, the 52 American hostages would be released and rescued on January 20, 1979 minutes after President Jimmy Carter would no longer be President. In the end, this committee follows the beginning of the crisis when no hostages have been rescued or any attempts have been made yet.

Questions to Consider

- How can the U.S. Government save the hostages without any harm coming to the Americans captured?
- What plans can be made to fool the Iranians from the inside (as a hostage)?
- How can other nations help the Americans during this time?
- If the hostages are successfully returned to the United States, what actions should be taken to prevent future hostage crisis?
- Can the United States act peacefully in securing the return of the hostages, or will the use of military force be necessary?
- How can the Iranians fool the Americans into convincing them to hand over the Shah?
- How can the Iranians better show their concerns without violence or violent protests?
- How can the United States handle violent protests or crimes towards Iranians during this unpredictable time?

Roles in the Committee

Tony Mendez (U.S.)

Tony is an American technical operations officer for the C.I.A. (Central Intelligence Agency), who served in covert operations in Iran.

President Jimmy Carter (U.S.)

The current President of the United States during the Iranian hostage crisis, but would eventually be replaced by Regan.

Ronald Regan (U.S.)

Reagan was the President after Jimmy Carter and is suspected of having been involved in the creation of the hostage crisis.

Sheldon J. Krys (U.S.)

Sheldon served as the executive director of the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, assistant Secretary of State for administration and information management and as assistant secretary for diplomatic security.

Robert G. Anders (U.S.)

Robert is an American diplomat and a part of the “Canadian Caper.”

Walter F. Mondale (U.S.)

Walter is the Vice President of Jimmy Carter, who assists Carter in plans to rescue the Americans stuck in Tehran.

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Zbigniew Brzezinski (U.S.)

Current Secretary of State and involved in many plans and secret documents concerning the hostage crisis.

Cyrus Roberts Vance (U.S.)

He is serving as the Secretary of State and served as a lawyer under President Jimmy Carter.

Ken Taylor (Canada)

A Canadian Ambassador who led an escape of 6 American potential hostages, while leading the steps for the future hostages to be freed.

Massoumeh Ebtekar (Iran)

Massoumeh was the spokeswoman for the Iranian hostage takers alongside spreading the message of the Ayatollah over mass-media outlets.

Ebrahim Asgharzadeh (Iran)

He is one of the Iranian college hostage takers and serves as an Iranian political activist during the Iranian hostage crisis.

Mohsen Sazegara (Iran)

He is a pro-democracy political activist and Iranian journalist, he served in the government of Mir-Hossein Mousavi.

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Ayatollah Khomeini (Iran)

He is the current head of state, after overthrowing the Shah. The Ayatollah hates westernization and is under control of the fate of the hostages alongside working with the hostage takers.

Mahnaz Afkhami (Iran)

She is a Iranian women's rights activist and is serving in the cabinet of Iran during the crisis.

Mehdi Bazargan (Iran)

He was appointed by the Ayatollah as Prime Minister during Iran's Revolution with its interim government.

Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (Iran) (the Shah)

He was the former head of state, but was overthrown and was sent into exile. However, his exile in the United States for cancer treatment would spark more of a revolution.

Saeed Hajjarian (Iran)

He is a member of Tehran city council and adviser to the president of Iran.

Abolhassan Banisadr (Iran)

He is an Iranian politician, writer, and political dissident; however, he is known for being the first president of Iran after the Iranian Revolution and partly during the Iranian hostage crisis.

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