

You're invited!

Participate in the *Middle East & North Africa International Symposium!*

What is the Middle East & North Africa International Symposium? It's a meeting, sponsored by the United Nations, where delegates representing many nations and territories from the Middle East and northern Africa meet to discuss some of the significant current issues occurring today.

What are the agenda items for this year's Symposium? This year's symposium will consider two broad areas during debate:

(1) **Political, governmental, and economic issues**, such as territorial disputes (Palestine and Kurdistan) and other ethnic tensions; political representation and power (especially for women); economic and infrastructure development; and civil wars, armed uprisings, and other instances of armed warfare; and

(2) **Social and cultural issues**, such as status of refugees and displaced peoples, adequate funding for refugee camps, and pathways-to-citizenship programs; gender equality (including access to education and health care, especially for women); and access to clean water, safe housing, and food security.

Specific agenda topics and proposals (i.e., Agenda Issues) will be determined by the delegates of the United Nations and will be available prior to the day of the Symposium.

Who attends? You will attend in the role of a delegate representing a nation or territory, mostly from SW Asia or North Africa. In addition, there will be students representing the United Nations.

When will the Conference take place? This year's conference will be held **all day Tuesday, April 23, 2019.**

As a delegate, what are my responsibilities?

First, conduct enough research about your country or region so that you can effectively represent its interests and goals at the Symposium. Once the specific agenda topics are announced, familiarize yourself with your country's potential position on each topic. As you research, consider possible solutions to the problems of your country, and prepare possible proposals for change.

Second, prepare a **well written, typed research paper** (expository research essay) in which you explain in detail about the political/governmental/economic or social/cultural issues as they relate to the country you are representing. For example, you might write a paper that details the territorial disputes in Israel, the civil war in Syria,

the need to increase secondary education opportunities in Yemen, or the impact on society of the terrorist group Boko Haram in Nigeria. Within your paper, include **visual information** (charts, diagrams, maps, photos, etc.) that enhances the information presented. **This part of the project is individual work.**

Third is the Symposium itself. The day's discussions focus on the Agenda Issues from the UN Delegation. Be prepared to state your country's positions to the rest of the delegates, both in small group discussions and in the General Session. During the working sessions, present your counter-proposal(s) and respond to other delegates. The general session will end with a vote on UN's Agenda Issues, if time permits.

The UN representatives are responsible for conducting the conference. They will prepare expository research papers that reflect the interests of the U.N. and meet to prepare Agenda Issues that will become the basis for discussion at the symposium. Finally, they are "in charge" on the day of the symposium.

What background sources should I use to get started?

Use quality sources provided by our district, such as Gale (e.g., *Student Resources in Context*, etc.), *CultureGrams*, and *World Book*. Other good places to begin include the *BBC News Country Profiles* and *CIA World Fact Book*.

When has time at school been scheduled to help me complete my research?

Wednesday, March 20 and Monday, April 1 (no fooling).

What is due for the work session Monday, April 1?

Bring evidence that you have read at least two background sources. Evidence can include printed copies of articles that are highlighted or notes with bibliographic information.

Additional information:

Once you've completed the background research, you'll need to research and read about the current issues or events going on in your country. Good websites to peruse include the following:

- *BBC News* – In addition to searching for your country specifically, there are sections devoted to the news in the Middle East and Africa. Also, there are Special Reports linked in both these sections that provide additional background information about recent history.

- *Al Jazeera* – This is the main news site for the Arab World. Google “Al Jazeera” and select the English version (not Al Jazeera America). Again, you can search for your country individually or visit the sections devoted to the Middle East or Africa. In Depth reports are also available.
- Gale – Use the Powersearch for your country. Then select News on the left. This should give you a list of current events from English daily newspapers for your country.
- *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* – In September 2015, the UN adopted 17 goals as a plan of action to protect the earth while promoting prosperity among its peoples. Along with an explanation of each goal are news items, links to various UN agencies (two are listed below), and links to outside news sources. A good place to begin is this url:
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>
- *Human Rights Watch* – This website has news specifically addressing human rights, including women’s rights and refugees’ issues.
- *World Health Organization* – This website is the UN’s public health site. It has information for every UN member nation, including links to numerous reports and quite a bit of specific demographic data, a good source for visual data for your essay.
- The *UN High Commissioner for Refugees* - This is the UN’s website (The UN Refugee Agency) for refugee assistance and protection. It has news and stories about refugees around the world as well as links to additional information.

When will I write the essay? Essays will be written at home (this is not a work sample); however, as we approach the day of Symposium, writing work days will be scheduled, when students can receive individualized and peer help on their essays. These dates will be announced as they are arranged.

All essays are due to Ms. Pittenger no later than **Friday, April 26!**

Do I need to cite the resources I use? Yes! A Works Cited list in proper MLA format is required. Material that is paraphrased or quoted, plus all digital images used, must be cited within the paper as well. **Papers submitted without references or proper citations will not be accepted. All work should be in the student’s own words or quoted and cited properly to earn credit.**

How will I earn my grade on this writing project? The final essay will be worth 100 points, which will be determined by the OR State Writing Scoring Guide and a separate scoring rubric for the visual supports (maps, charts, etc., included with the essay) and MLA formatting.