



جامعة جورجتاون
كلية الشؤون الدولية في قطر
Model United Nations

Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar

I. About the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL):

Name:

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (also known as the fourth committee or SPECPOL) is one of the six main committees in the General Assembly of The United Nations.

Objective:

SPECPOL deals with subjects such as ones related to decolonization, refugees, human rights, peacekeeping, mine action, outer space, public information, atomic radiation, and University for Peace.¹

History:

At first, SPECPOL was set as an ad-hoc committee within the United Nations. On 1978, it was set in to replace the Trusteeship Committee in the position of the 4th committee. In the 1990's, the United Nations declared the "International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism."² In its efforts to pursue this goal, the United Nations reformed SPECPOL into the Special Political and Decolonization Committee with the main aim of supervising decolonization. As of 2013, the United Nations recognizes 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories that are mostly in the Atlantic and Caribbean, Pacific, and with two in Europe and Africa.³ The largest Non-Self-Governing territory, in terms of population, is the Western Sahara which is inhabited by a little over half a million

¹ <http://www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/index.shtml>

² General Assembly Resolution 43/46

³ <http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/nonselvgovterritories.shtml>

people. It is vital to mention that this number is highly debatable due to the fact that numerous territories have referendums where people are rejecting self-governance.⁴

Function:

SPECPOL is mainly an advisory committee that is responsible for recommending action agendas to the different bodies within the United Nations such as the Security Council, specialized agencies of the United Nations, governments of member states, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Therefore, it should be stressed that as an advisory committee, SPECPOL does not have the authority to take military action nor pass a binding resolution. On the other hand, the role SPECPOL played should not be underestimated. Since the commencement of the United Nations, more than 80 former colonies gained their independence with the help of SPECPOL's various resolutions and debates of promoting the self-determination of states and efforts of decolonization. In the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People of 1960, it states that "all people have a right to self-determination and proclaimed that colonialism should be brought to a speedy and unconditional end."⁵

Members:

The bureau of the 68th session of SPECPOL primarily consists of three main positions.⁶

- Chairperson
 - H.E. Mr. Carlos Enrique García González (El Salvador)
- Vice-Chairpersons
 - Mr. Mafiroane Motanyane (Lesotho)
 - Ms. Christina Rafti (Cyprus)
 - Mr. Francesco Santillo (Italy)
- Rapporteur
 - Mr. Michal Komada (Slovakia)

II. Shia Movements in the Middle East:

To understand the topic of Shia and the Middle East, we first have to learn more about Islam, which is the religion that the Sunni and Shia sects originate from. Then we have to learn more about the Middle East and the nature of the states in that part of the world.

⁴ http://www.busun.net/archive/Background_Guides/SPECPOL.pdf

⁵ <http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/history.shtml>

⁶ <http://www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/68/bureau.shtml>

Islam at a Glance:

The word *Islam*'s literal translation is to submit, meaning to submit the soul to the will of Allah (God). Islam and Christianity count for the majority of believers in the world with Islam being the second largest followed religion with more than 1.5 Billion followers⁷.

- Muslims (followers of Islam) believe that God sent Prophets to the world in order to teach humans how to live and worship him according to his laws.
- Islam was founded with Prophet Mohammed's pilgrimage to Makkah that happened 1435 years ago, according to the lunar calendar.
- The four Prophets of God in Islam are Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed.
- Muslims base their laws on two sources, the Quran (the Holy book) and Sunnah (Which is the Prophet Mohammed's speech and teachings).
- Islam consists of five pillars:
 1. Declaration of Faith (Shahadah): It is summed in the line of "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger." When Muslims declare this, they are claiming that Allah is the only God and Mohammed is his Prophet, and they personally accept this as the truth as they will obey the rules of Islam in their lives.
 2. Praying (Salat): It is an obligation on Muslims to perform the prayer five times a day. A prayer for a Muslim is the unification of the mind, soul, and body in an aim to worship God. Also, before praying, Muslims have to be clean by performing a ritual washing called Wudhu.
 3. Charity (Zakat): Muslims are required to give a proportion of their wealth yearly to Charity. The act is seen as a way of self-purification and worship. It is not the same as giving charity out of kindness, as it is given yearly using 2.5% of a Muslim's wealth in aim to benefit the poor.
 4. Fasting (Sawm): During the Holy month of Ramadan, which is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, Muslims are required to fast from sunrise to sunset. The fasting is obtaining things such as any kind of food or drink, active and passive smoking, and sexual activity.
 5. Pilgrimage (Hajj): In a lifetime, a Muslim has to perform the act of pilgrimage at least once if they are physically able and can afford it. Every year, Muslims from all backgrounds, origins, and social classes meet in Makkah and perform the ritual. It signifies the importance of life on earth, and the afterlife by stripping away all indicators of social status and wealth and having all Muslims equal.

⁷ <http://www.pewforum.org/2009/10/07/mapping-the-global-muslim-population/>

Sunni and Shia:

The words *Sunni* and *Shia* are constantly mentioned in news about the Muslim world. However, not a lot of people know what these phrases really mean. Thus, in order to understand the modern Muslim world, we have to first understand the origins and differences between Sunni Muslims and Shia Muslims.

Introduction:

The sectarian division between Sunnis and Shias (Shiites) is deemed as the oldest and largest division in the history of Islam. The word *Sunni* refers to who follows the Sunnah (or what the prophet has ordered) and the word *Shia* refers to the contraction of the phrase 'Shiat Ali' or the "partisans of Ali".⁸ Both Sunnis and Shias agree on the basic teaching of Islam and on the Quran but differ mainly in the question of the successor of Mohammed. Thus, after the death of the Prophet Mohammed, the legacy of the Islamic state along with its nearly one hundred thousand followers had to be succeeded by choosing the first Caliph (politico-social leader). The majority of Muslims at the time had chosen Abu Baker, who was a close companion of the Prophet, as the political, and not spiritual, successor of the Islamic state. However, there was a minority that believed Ali, who was the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, should take the position of Caliph in both political and spiritual terms.

Disagreement:

Sunnis and Shias both support their claims of succession with evidence. Sunnis argue that the Prophet chose Abu Baker to lead the congregational prayer which led to naming him as the next leader. Shias claim that the Prophet stood upon his followers in the last Hajj and declared that Ali is the spiritual guide of believers and that whoever follows him should follow Ali. At the end, the people who believe that Abu Baker is the prophet's successor are known as Sunni Muslims while whoever believes that Ali should have been the successor are known as Shia Muslims. However, one should not be confused with the idea of successors or Caliphs to Prophets because both Sunnis and Shias agree that Mohammed was the last Prophet.

Beginnings of Division:

At first, Ali did not pledge allegiance to Abu Baker. Months after, according to both Sunni and Shia claims, he changed his mind and accepted Abu Baker in order to ensure the solidity of the Islamic State. Before Abu Baker's death, he appointed Umar as the second Caliph. Umar nominated six candidates for the position of the third Caliph and Othman was selected. However, Othman was murdered and eventually Ali was selected as the fourth Caliph. In spite

⁸ http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/subdivisions/sunnishia_1.shtml

of being selected, Aisha, daughter of Abu Baker and the Prophet's favored wife, accused Ali of being sloppy with investigating and bringing justice upon Othman's killers. The accusation led to the Battle of the Camel in Basra in Southern Iraq between Aisha and Ali where Aisha was defeated. She later apologized to Ali, but the Battle of the Camel already had a diminishing affected in the Islamic community.

Broadening of Division:

With Islam spreading into Syria in the time of Ali's rule, the governor of Damascus, Muawiya, also not pleased with Ali's efforts into bringing justice upon Othman's killers, challenged Ali for the position of Caliph. The challenge led to the battle of Siffin where Ali and his followers felt unable to fight their fellow Muslims thus resulting in a settlement between Ali and Muawiya with the use of outside judges. The use of these judges was seen as unacceptable by a group of Ali's supporters who used the slogan "Rule belongs only to Allah"⁹. The group was later known as the Kharijites, who formed their own sect and were against all competitors for the Caliphate. They ended up killing Ali as he was praying in the Masjid of Kufa in Iraq. Later on, the Kharijites were defeated in numerous uprisings and around half a million of their descendants live currently in "North Africa, Oman, and Zanzibar as a sub-sect of Islam known as the Ibadiyah"¹⁰.

The Clash of Successors:

After the death of Ali, Muawiya became the Caliphate of the Islamic state and moved the capital to his previous location of governance, Damascus. Unlike previous Caliphs, Muawiya preferred to take a monarchal position instead of ensuring the notion of equality and with his death followed the succession of his son Yazid. Similarly, as Yazid took the position of Caliph, Ali's youngest son Hussein, who was the third Shia imam, was asked by the people of Kufa to lead them. Hussein accepted the invitation but was met with Yazid's fighters in Karbala as he was moving from Medina to Kufa. Even though Hussein was outnumbered, he did not pledge his loyalty to Yazid which got him and his followers killed in battle. His death was seen as heroic, as he sacrificed his life to ensure the survival of Shia Islam. Due to the fight of Karbala, the notion of martyrdom was strong in Shia Islam and its followers celebrate it yearly on the day of Ashura.

Theological Differences:

At the beginning, the main difference between Sunnah and Shia is the idea of who should lead the Islamic State. However, more critical differences in religion have been apparent. One of these differences is the interpretation of Hadith and Sunnah. Sunni's believe that Hadith

⁹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/subdivisions/sunnishia_1.shtml

¹⁰ http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/subdivisions/sunnishia_1.shtml

(Prophet Mohammed's speech) that is accounted by all of Mohammed's twelve thousand companions to be valid alike. Shia Muslims only abide by the Hadith accounted by the Prophet's close companion and family and believe that other texts are merely supplementary. These differences in interpretation led to differing opinions in the laws and rules of Islam.

Views of Each Other:

Most Sunnis and Shias do not allow their sectarian differences to affect them and the way they live life, but there are cases when this is not so true. An example of good faith in this divide is what Shaikh Mahmood Shaloot from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, which is the oldest Islamic teaching institution in the world, claimed as he believes that Shia Islam has equal status to that of the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence¹¹. On the other side, current global situations have caused extremism within these Muslims sect. Sunni would usually call Shia's rejecters of Islam to belittle them while Shias would call Muslims Wahhabis as a term to abuse whoever disagrees with Shias.

Sunni Historical Expansion:

The expansion of Sunni Islam resulted in the founding of four schools of religious thought by four scholars who were Hanbali, Hanafi, Maliki, and Shaafii, and the schools were named by them as well. Their research focused on interpreting Islamic answers for any moral or religious questions for all societies and any time. Sunni Islam spread through the Ummayyad and Abbasid dynasties where the Caliphs were only temporary leaders who would refer to religious scholars in order to answer any question about religion. The spread continued with the Mughal and Ottoman empires in a powerful rate to the extent that Sunnis almost represent around 90% of the one and a half billion Muslims in the world.¹²

Shia Historical Expansion:

The Shia's historical expansion was done by Imams who were appointed by the Prophet's family. Contrary to the acts of Caliphs, Imams were not involved in the public sphere; instead they lived within the shadows and were independent from the state itself. The Twelvers is the largest sect within Shia Islam and it is called by that name because of its follower's belief in twelve Imams who descend from the Prophet's family. The twelfth Imam is Mohammed Al-Mahdi and is thought to be hidden by God in a cave until her returns at the end of time. They believe that the Mahdi or Messiah is alive and will return to resurrect Islam's true calling. Till his return, the successors to the Shia community are living scholars who are given the title Ayatollah. These scholars represent the hidden Mahdi's message and their power is seen by the

¹¹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/subdivisions/sunnishia_1.shtml

¹² <http://www.pewforum.org/2009/10/07/mapping-the-global-muslim-population/>

majority as limited to religious matters. The Shia population is found in various countries but is mostly prominent in Iran (90% of the population), Iraq, Pakistan, and India.

The Middle East:

After having enough background information about Sunnis and Shias, we have to learn more about the Middle East, its countries, and the socio political situations in the states of the region.

Introduction to Countries Within:

1.  **Bahrain:** Islamic nation with Sunni government but Shia majority of population, due to claiming independence from Persia, and is faced with discrimination. Also, in recent times with the spread of the Arab Spring, there was a Shia opposition against the Sunni government which caused the intervention of the Gulf Cooperation Council's Peninsula Shield Force.
2.  **Cyprus:** The majority of Greek Cypriots are Christians following the Greek Orthodox Church; however the state is bordered with Northern Cyprus which is majority Sunni Muslims and are in a constant clash.
3.  **Egypt:** Islamic Nation with the Sunni sect being predominant and having a very small Shia minority within the state.
4.  **Iran:** The official religion of Iran is the Twelver Shia branch of Islam and it is seen as the mother state of the Shia sect. However, there is a Sunni minority within the state and is officially recognized and protected with reserved seats in the Parliament. Recently, there has been much controversy with Iran's nuclear plan and with the state explicitly showing hostility towards Israel and supporting Shia uprisings.
5.  **Iraq:** An Islamic state that has a mixture of Sunni and Shia Muslims with Shia being the larger percentage. Iraq is an example of a mixture of people following both sects and living within one state but with the Shia Muslims holding political power.
6.  **Israel:** The Jewish state is seen as the mother nation for Jews and is in a relatively hostile position with clearly stated enemy countries. These countries are explicitly written in Israeli law and they are Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Sudan, and Yemen.
7.  **Jordan:** The population in Jordan is predominantly Muslim with Sunnis being the majority of the people. There is a small non-denominational Muslim minority who believe in a form of Islam that is not restricted to a certain sect.
8.  **Kuwait:** Similar to the case of Iraq, Kuwait's majority is Muslim with have most of the Muslims following the Sunni sect while the rest is Shia. In Kuwait, the mixture is not as problematic as other states and the situation is calmer within the nation.

9.  **Lebanon:** The majority of the population in Lebanon is Muslim, while having a large percentage of Christians. The Muslim population within Lebanon is almost equally divided between Sunnis and Shias and the government is set up to represent the different religions within Lebanon in a fair way with having different religions inhabit the different seats.
10.  **Northern Cyprus:** The state is only recognized by Turkey and has a majority of Muslims from which are mainly Turkish settlers. It is in constant conflict with Greek Cyprus due to the refusal of its separation from Cyprus.
11.  **Oman:** Three quarters of the Omani population is Muslim with half of the population following the previously discussed Islam sect of Ibadiyah¹³.
12.  **Palestine:** An Islamic state, Palestine is predominantly Muslim with a small Christian minority.
13.  **Qatar:** The majority of people in Qatar are Sunni Muslim with a small Shia minority within the state. There are barely any clashes between the sects but Sunni Muslims have the majority power.
14.  **Saudi Arabia:** The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is majority Muslim and is seen as the mother state for Sunni Islam especially due to the fact that the Holy cities of Makkah and Medina are a part of it. However, there is a small Shia minority that inhibits a limited space in Saudi Arabia. Mostly hostile against Iran, Saudi Arabia is supervising the minority Shias and stopping any opposition to the Sunni rule. It also supports the Sunni government of Bahrain and protects its government from the Shia protests.
15.  **Syria:** Sunni Arabs constitute more than half of the population while Shias are a minority with Christians being a little less than them. However, the government is Alawite Shia and believers of that sect of Shia Islam hold the main positions in the military as well.
16.  **Turkey:** Being a secular state, Turkey does not have an official religion but is almost entirely Muslim with the majority following the Hanafi school of Sunni Islam. There is a relatively small Shia minority within Turkey who follow the Twelvers sect.
17.  **United Arab Emirates:** The majority of the population in the UAE is Muslims with having Sunnis as the primary sect and Shias being a minority in the country.
18.  **Yemen:** Religion in Yemen is divided between the two sects of Sunni and Shia Muslims. While the larger half is Sunni, the other half of Yemen is Shia as well and there is an issue with the freedom of religion is forbidden and not forgetting to mention the case of having a corrupt government.

¹³ <http://www.peacebuilding.no/Regions/Middle-East-and-North-Africa/The-Gulf/Publications/Human-rights-in-the-smaller-Gulf-states-Bahrain-Kuwait-Oman-Qatar-and-UAE>

Map of the Middle East¹⁴:



¹⁴ <http://www.zonu.com/detail-en/2009-09-17-615/Middle-East-Political-Map-1976.html>

III. Causes of Conflict and Existing Solutions:

These movements are caused due to a clash of ideologies. Sunni Muslims do not accept the Shia doctrine as being legitimate and vis-à-vis Shia Muslims with Sunni rule. Shias describe Sunnis as extremist Wahhabi oppressors and Sunnis describe Shia as deceitful corruptors who are in an aim of gaining power. Following are possible causes for the conflict.

Main Causes:

- Clash of beliefs.
- Historical rivalry.
- Rights not given for Shia minorities.
- Lack of fair democratic governments.
- Little or no representation of Shia in Sunni majority states.
- Shortage of social and economic development in countries of the region.
- States supporting wrongful armed groups that carry the same sectarian view.
- Corruption of nation leaders seeking the advancement of their own ethnic group with regard to other groups.
- Tension between the powers of the West and Iran which cause terrorist organization such as Hamas and Hezbollah to fight back.

Existing and Possible Solutions:

Some solutions have been applied in different states, but the issue was that these solutions have not deemed to be viable due to the way or extent of their applications. In most situations, the action needed a bit more of enforcement and persistence to ensure its effectiveness. Examples of these solutions are as follows.

- Great powers such as Iran and Saudi Arabia should stop supporting the divide between the two sects.
- Secularism, which is governing without having any religious representation within political affairs.
- Revolution of the people and revolting against the current government which is the case with the Arab Spring.
- The intervention of the United Nations by having more political engagement in the region and acting as a medium between these sectarian divisions.

- Confessionalism: the act of equally distributing the government between religious groups in hopes of having power proportionally mixed within religion and politics.

IV. Current Status:

With the start of the Arab Spring, the conflict between Sunni and Shia Muslims has been fairly prominent in Middle Eastern states such as Bahrain, Lebanon, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. The movements are a case of Shia Muslims inflowing Sunni majority states. In other cases, it is standing up for their rights or opposing the Sunni rule.

Primarily, the main actors in the case of the Shia movements within the Middle East are the mother states of Iran and Saudi Arabia, the terrorist group such as Hezbollah and Al-Qaeda, and the Shia minorities within Sunni states.

Syria:

Currently, with the Syrian dilemma, there is a view that a possible sectarian war could happen within the Middle East and Syria would be serving as the battleground. The two fronts that might get into battle are the Syrian government with the support of Hezbollah, Iran, Iraq, and Russia and the Syrian Free Army with the Gulf States, Turkey, and the powers of the West.

Lebanon:

With the issues in neighboring Syria, Lebanon faces the danger of getting into an unbalanced situation with increased tension between Sunnis and Shias. If Lebanon does not improve its power sharing system, it may be faced with the similar situation of civil war in Iraq. To avoid this, the Sunni, Shia, and Christian people of Lebanon have to work together in the better good of the state. However, recent events show otherwise.

Iraq:

In recent times, due to the Shia government's acts against Sunni Muslims, sectarian violence is increasing and there is a chance that this could lead to a new civil war. With people dying in sectarian attack, Sunnis and Shias are avoiding each other's neighborhoods. In the past, Iraqis had the choice to flee into Syria; however that choice is not available anymore. Actually the Syrian war has inspired Sunni Iraqis into joining their Syrian brothers in battle and go against the government in Iraq.

Bahrain:

In the Royal state of Bahrain, the Sunni government has been cracking down on Shia-run demonstrations. The Bahraini government has responded to these protests by destroying Shia

mosques, torturing protestors, and imprisoning some for long amounts of time. The Shia opposition was mostly controlled by having the support of the Gulf countries in the GCC that sent the joint Peninsula Shield Force.

Saudi Arabia:

The Qatif region has the largest percentage of Shia inhabitants in Saudi Arabia. Most Shia Muslims in the Kingdom are from that part and with the rise of the Arab Spring; the people of the province protested the Sunni Al-Saud rule. These protests were abruptly stopped by the Saudi government apprehending the heads of the uprising and jailing them. There was also an occasion where these protestors called for a day of rage and wanted to cause protests throughout Saudi Arabia. However, the government announced the illegality of protests and quickly stopped any signs of demonstrations.

Iran:

With Iran actively supporting revolting Shias, there was much hostility seen between it and the states of the Middle East. By supporting Assad's rule in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas in Palestine, Iran did its best to extend its influence into the Arab world. Internally, Iran did not have as much struggle as the Arab states did and was mostly in a stable condition. Its main issue was its nuclear agenda which was contested by the world community. Nevertheless, with the election of a new president, Iran has reinitiated its communications with the United States which led to less trade restrictions.

Egypt:

Due to the state being primarily Sunni, only a small fraction of the population know about the about the small and hidden Shia population. With the fall of Mubarak, the preaching against Shias increased and there was a general warning of the fear of its possible spread into Egypt in the future. In Egypt's case, the Sunni-Shia divide was not as affective and seen as in other states.

Palestine:

Almost all Palestinians are Sunni Muslims and the only relation Palestine had to Shia Muslims was by Hamas, who controlled the Gaza strip, and their association with Iran. Nonetheless, those ties were cut when Syria went into civil war.

Al-Qaeda:

The name of the Sunni terrorist group literally translates to "The Base" which was founded by Osama Bin Laden. They are a militant and stateless extremist group that aims to follow its

skewed vision of Jihad and false interpretation of Islam. Their fights are mostly on non-Sunni Muslims, non-Muslims, but never on Sunnis. Al-Qaeda attacks are on mosques and gatherings of non-Sunnis and were prominent in the case of Iraqi Shia majority and the Syrian Shia regime.

Hezbollah:

The “Party of God” is a Shia Islamic militant group that is based as a political party in Lebanon. Hezbollah was founded in 1982 after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The Lebanese Shia organization was founded by the “Iranian ambassador to Syria, Hashemi Mohtashemi, who later became Iran’s minister of interior”.¹⁵ Hezbollah followed the rhetoric of Khomeini in their operations, which was the spread of Islamic revolution and the opposition of Israel. The Hezbollah was against the United States as well in their view of them being threats to their existence. They were responsible for bombing the U.S. headquarters of 1983 in Beirut and it was the first major suicide attack in the Middle East. At first, Hezbollah was supported heavily by the Iranian government, but by the time of the Lebanese civil war in 1990, it was able to support itself as a patriotic Lebanese party.¹⁶ They support the current Bashar Syrian government and fight against the Sunni Muslims of the Free Army. The political party in Lebanon has much backing by the Shia population in Lebanon while the rest of the Lebanese population was against the party.

Question to Consider:

Here are some questions to think about and consider while writing position papers, resolutions, and amendments:

- How big is the role of Western powers in this issue?
- What solution could be founded that satisfies both Sunnis and Shias?
- How can Shia minorities live peacefully within a Sunni majority state?
- Would giving independence to Shia minorities be seen as a viable solution?
- Are Sunnis and Shias still in conflict due to the history or is there more to it?
- Will the Shia movement be more peaceful in case of resolving the Syrian issue?
- How large is the affect of mother states such as Saudi Arabia and Iran on the conflict?
- What are the motives of Saudi Arabia and Iran in supporting Sunni and Shia Muslims?
- Was the Arab Spring a cause to the increase of the intensity of the violence of these movements?

¹⁵Halm, Heinz. *The Shiites: A Short History*. Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2007. 166. Print.

¹⁶ Halm, 166.

- Can the United Nations interfere with a state's right to sovereignty and help underrepresented Shia minorities?

V. Additional Online Sources and Tips:

Please note:

- **Avoid** using Wikipedia as a main resource. Articles on Wikipedia can be edited and written by anyone; therefore it is not deemed as a trusted resource. However, it is fine to use it as a starting bloc into having a main idea and using it as a guide while checking the cited articles at the end for reliable resources.
- Please research ahead of time! Doing research last minute will not be of much use.
- To learn about a state's position on a certain aspect, it is useful to read the news articles online. For example, to learn about Shia in Saudi Arabia, simply type that in news.google.com
- Remember that this is a chance to participate and learn, sitting in session will not be much fun and will not allow the embracement of the whole experience.
- Other useful resources are newspaper websites such as the New York Post and the Economist.
- Be as professional and avoid biases. A delegate's job is to represent the view of their state and no themselves.
- Check out the following bibliography for link that might be useful while conducting research.
- Lastly, remember to enjoy your time! At the end of the day we're all here to enjoy our time and have fun while getting some academic knowledge out of it.

Bibliography:

- Associated Press. "Conflict between Sunnis, Shias Abounds in Middle East." *Ahram Online*. Ahram Online, 24 June 2013. Web. 6 Dec. 2013.
<<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/8/74799/World/Region/Conflict-between-Sunnis,-Shias-abounds-in-Middle-E.aspx>>.
- BBC. "Islam at a Glance." *Religions*. BBC News, 30 June 2009. Web. 18 Dec. 2013.
<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/ataglance/glance.shtml>>.
- BBC. "Sunni and Shi'a." *Religions*. BBC News, 19 Aug. 2009. Web. 19 Dec. 2013.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/subdivisions/sunnishia_1.shtml>.
- Boeree, George. "Sunnis and Shiites." *Sunnis and Shiites*. George Boeree, 2013. Web. 10 Dec. 2013. <<http://webpace.ship.edu/cgboer/sunnisshiites.html>>.
- Ericsson, Filip. "Iraq Today - The Failure of the US and an Emerging Shia/Sunni War." *World Politics Uncovered*. World Politics Uncovered, 24 Oct. 2013. Web. 8 Dec. 2013. <<http://worldpoliticsuncovered.wordpress.com/2013/10/24/iraq-today-the-failure-of-the-us-and-an-emerging-shiasunni-war/>>.
- Ericsson, Filip. "The Shia/Sunni Conflict in the Middle East Wars â€” Syria into Focus." *World Politics Uncovered*. World Politics Uncovered, 28 Sept. 2013. Web. 8 Dec. 2013. <<http://worldpoliticsuncovered.wordpress.com/2013/09/28/the-shiasunni-conflict-in-the-middle-east-wars-syria-into-focus/>>.
- Halm, Heinz. *The Shiites: A Short History*. Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2007. Print.
- Hunter, Shireen. "Sunni –Shia Tensions Are More About Politics, Power and Privilege than Theology." *Sunni –Shia Tensions Are More About Politics, Power and Privilege than Theology*. Prince AlWaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, 2013. Web. 5 Dec. 2013.
<<http://acmcu.georgetown.edu/135390.html>>.
- NSNBC. "Is the Middle East Moving toward a Shia-Sunni War?" *NSNBC International*. NSNBC, 5 May 2013. Web. 11 Dec. 2013. <<http://nnsbc.me/2013/05/10/is-the-middle-east-moving-toward-a-shia-sunni-war/>>.

Georgetown Model United Nations Background Guide

Rubin, Barry. "The Middle East's Main Battle Is Among Muslims, Sunni vs. Shia; Arabs vs. Persians." *Rubin Reports*. PJ Media, 15 Apr. 2013. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.
<<http://pjmedia.com/barryrubin/2013/04/15/the-main-battle-in-the-middle-east-is-among-muslims-sunni-vs-shia-arabs-vs-persians/>>.

United Nations. "Special Political and Decolonization." *General Assembly of the United Nations*. UN, 2013. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.
<<http://www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/index.shtml>>.

United Nations. "The United Nations and Decolonization." *UN News Center*. United Nations, 2013. Web. 9 Dec. 2013.
<<http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/index.shtml>>.