

NIRAMUN'22 United Nations Historical Security Council

The Democratization of Chile in 1990

Letter from The Chair

Esteemed delegates,

Thank you for choosing to participate in the 10th annual United Nations Security Council at NIRAMUN 2022! We hope that your time on this committee will serve as an enriching and valuable part of your development as a delegate. Your role as a member state within the Security Council, the most powerful body within the United Nations, is critical in managing the dilemma that concerns the democratization of Chile in 1990. We look forward to seeing you utilize your argumentative, diplomatic, and research skills in tackling the matter at hand. Should you have any questions or request any further information, please reach out to the committee's director.

Genesis Deters – genesisjohanna@hotmail.com

Welcome everyone, I am Genesis Deters and I will be serving as your director in the United Nations Historical Security Council at NIRAMUN 2022! I graduated from Nova Southeastern University last May with a bachelor's degree in Legal Studies and a minor in Philosophy, and am eager to continue participating in NIRAMUN this year. My experience as a delegate in undergrad helped me develop and strengthen both my critical thinking and debate skills with every simulation and committee I participated in. Serving as a delegate provided great insight into the many issues the international community faces and motivated me to use my abilities to address such issues. I hope that participating in this conference serves as an edifying experience for you all.

I am confident I speak for all of us here at NIRAMUN when I say we are so excited to see what you have to offer in the upcoming conference. Do not be afraid to contact me with any questions and concerns you may have, as I am only an email away and willing to assist you. I look forward to working with you all very soon.

Genesis Deters

Director, United Nations Historical Security Council, NIRAMUN 2022

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is the most influential and impactful organ within the organization. Following its establishment in 1945, the UNSC was recognized for its implementation of measures to maintain international peace and security, promote the importance of human rights, encourage cooperation and respect amongst nations, and act as a mediating body in times of conflict across borders. All member states of the United Nations are to carry out the decisions of the Security Council. Several factions of the United Nations as an entity are allowed to make recommendations and suggestions in times of conflict, but only the Security Council is allowed to enforce mandatory procedures.

In maintaining peace and security, the Security Council has the ability to: (i) set forth the grounds for the discussion; (ii) conduct investigations and mediate; (iii) appoint special envoys or military enforcement, or; (iv) appoint the Secretary-General as the deciding individual in order to settle the conflict. The Security Council also has the right to enforce economic sanctions, travel bans, financial penalties, and the division of diplomatic relations. The overarching purpose of the Security Council, therefore, is to implement measures that address sociopolitical disputes on an international level, while aiming to resolve such situations with little to no repercussions.

DISCLAIMER

The Historical Security Council at NIRAMUN'22 may feature a crisis situation, wherein new information may be introduced during conference proceedings. In a crisis, delegates are expected to use critical thinking skills to propose and properly draft a Committee Directive* that can effectively address the issue. Ensure that you are proactive in familiarizing yourself with matters relevant to international relations prior to the conference. Delegates are also expected to uphold the positions of their nations despite the crisis- unless their member state is directly affected.

** Committee Directive- this is a document with a similar format to that of a working paper or resolution. However, it is slightly more informal in terms of preambulatory and operative clauses. During a crisis, certain member states will be affected directly. These delegates will be expected to spearhead the committee directive, while simultaneously contributing to draft resolutions.*

ADDRESSING THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF CHILE IN 1990

INTRODUCTION

The critical issue this Historical Security Council aims to address is Chile's transition from a military dictatorship under General Augusto Pinochet to a democratically elected government led by President Patricio Aylwin in 1990. Delegates in this committee will grapple with the pressing matters of the time, some of which involve how the newly elected government will seek to maintain economic stability, increase citizens' trust in the integrity of their institutions, and raise international awareness on the unique issues young democracies face, amongst others. Although it may seem anachronistic to connect this matter to the 2030 SDGs, delegates must become well familiarized with SDG 16 to maximize the relevance and value of their insights.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The circumstances surrounding Chile's transition from a military dictatorship to a democratically elected form of government are complex and multifaceted. This background guide aims to serve as the springboard for your research, and the issue's historical context will be presented accordingly below.

Chile has long been commended as one of South America's most stable constitutional governments. Although difficulties involving economic instability, an inability of elites to compromise, and tension amidst the masses existed in the mid to late 20th century, Chile's government could be praised for its ability to preserve itself as a parliamentary republic from 1892 to 1973, excluding the four-year period between 1928 and 1932.¹ Notably, Chile's military had largely refrained from intervening in politics, a phenomenon which transpired relatively often in Europe throughout the same period, and its political parties tended to effectively form coalitions and compromise.² The 1970 election and the forthcoming years foreshadowed the demise of the country's long-held democratic stability.

The dramatic 1970 election in Chile took place amidst a political climate wherein issues like the unequal representation of the electorate, property rights, deep ideological differences, and economic hardship had all intensified. Salvador Allende, a Marxist, won the plurality, but not the majority, and the Chilean Congress, despite an American attempt to provoke a military coup at the time, followed its constitutional mandate to choose a president in case such a situation occurred. It appointed Allende president, under the agreement that he would keep other governmental offices, like the judiciary and the legislature, independent.³

In the ensuing years, political polarization deepened. Allende's attempts at land and economic reform were deemed insufficient by struggling workers and peasants. Local leaders spearheaded factory takeovers and neighborhood organizations, and although they often did this democratically, they also often discriminated against people who did not positively back a revolution.⁴ On the right, an extraconstitutional disloyal opposition arose, backed by the United States, raising fears amidst the conservative population of the potential rise of an atheistic communist government.⁵ Two strongly divided factions accordingly became of importance, one keen on advancing radical redistribution efforts and arming workers, and the other on galvanizing support from the Catholic Church, middle and working class women, and sectors of business to raise the specter of a military coup. The political climate continued to intensify with the worsening of the economy in 1971.⁶ The United States doubled military aid in 1972, and in June 1973, a military coup was barely averted.⁷

¹ Hellinger, D. (2015). *Comparative politics of Latin America: Democracy at last?* (2nd ed., p. 209). Routledge.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Hellinger, D. (2015). *Comparative politics of Latin America: Democracy at last?* (2nd ed., p. 210). Routledge.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Hellinger, D. (2015). *Comparative politics of Latin America: Democracy at last?* (2nd ed., pp. 210-211). Routledge.

On September 11th, 1973, a military coup ensued. American and Chilean naval forces approached Chile's coast and tanks rolled through the streets. When he became aware of the coup, President Allende sought out refuge within the presidential palace. The Chilean Air Force bombed the palace in Santiago, and Allende's body was later recovered from its ruins. General Augusto Pinochet became the military strongman of the new regime, leading the dictatorship for the next 17 years. The regime's military leaders, at Pinochet's behest, led the brutal repression of the Chilean people. Tens of thousands of Chile's people suffered imprisonment, torture, and political persecution. The regime is notorious for having killed tens of thousands. It is also responsible for having employed enforced disappearances to intimidate people into submission. The intense political activity amongst the Chilean people that characterized Allende's presidency was harshly extinguished.

During the dictatorship, Pinochet championed free market policies. He oversaw the increase of Chile's copper, fruit, and wine exports, amongst others, and granted generous tax breaks for new mines in efforts to invite foreign investments.⁸ As opposition to authoritarian rule increased later into his rule, General Pinochet tightened his grip on power. In 1980, several high-profile political murders took place, and in response, Pinochet proposed a new constitution that opened the possibility of him giving up executive power eight years later, but only if he lost a plebiscite on his rule. Even then, he would remain the supreme commander of the armed forces. In September 1980, with his grip on power firm and no public opposition permitted, Pinochet won a referendum ratifying his new constitution, promulgated in 1981.⁹ The constitution restricted the activity of political parties and certified executive power in the hands of the military commander.¹⁰

Continually frustrated by the authoritarian government's grip on power, Chileans galvanized against Pinochet's rule. A collective effort of urban civic movements, the Catholic Church, and trade unions joined to protest not only the political repression they faced, but also the gross human rights violations that had taken place throughout the period.¹¹ Members of the Moderate Socialists and the Christian Democratic Party made concessions to negotiate the return to civilian government by agreeing that the transition would be in accordance with Pinochet's 1981 constitution. After the assassination attempt on Pinochet and the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1986, which seemed to boost Pinochet's status as executive, this alliance of moderate leftists and Christian Democrats, known as "La Concertación", negotiated across the aisle with conservative politicians to end restrictions on civil liberties and reinstitute democratic structures, like free and fair elections.¹² This broad ideological coalition, coupled with grassroots support, worked together to create a formidable movement against the military.¹³ In a 1989 referendum, the opposition alliance won, and the military decided to honor the result.¹⁴

⁸ Hellinger, D. (2015). *Comparative politics of Latin America: Democracy at last?* (2nd ed., p. 232). Routledge.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/inline_images/Chile.pdf

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/inline_images/Chile.pdf

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

CURRENT SITUATION

As this is a historical security council, we will begin in the early stages of the transition to a democratically elected government.

The 1989 plebiscite voted General Pinochet out of power, and with the military's return to the barracks, the people voted for Patricio Aylwin of the Christian Democratic Party as the country's first democratically elected president in December 1989.

It is now 1990. La Concertación, the alliance between the center and leftist parties that helped boost turnout against the military government in the 1989 referendum, is in power. President Aylwin has been elected, and has inherited the 1981 constitution adopted under Pinochet's rule. The constitution not only impedes investigation into the human rights violations the military committed during the Pinochet era, but also leaves Pinochet as commander of the armed forces for the next 10 years.¹⁵ The Senate is comprised of nonelected, life-long members, many, if not all of them, deferential to the general's preferences. The military's legacy is substantial, as judges, bureaucrats, and other officials appointed during the military's rule remain in office and by law cannot be replaced.¹⁶ The global economy is improving, free market policies are in place in Chile, and civilian-military relations are unstable.

ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations General Assembly considered the matter of political persecution and enforced disappearances in Chile in draft resolution A/C.3/42/L.88, voted on in November 1987. The document signaled the importance of "investigat[ing] and clari[fying] without further delay the fate of persons arrested for political reasons, who have subsequently disappeared".¹⁷ The delegation of Chile at the time voted against it, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland voted in favor, and the United States abstained. Many of Chile's regional neighbors were divided when voting, with Argentina, Bolivia, and Venezuela voting in favor, Brazil and Honduras abstaining, and Paraguay joining Chile in voting against.

The Economic and Social Council's Commission on Human Rights also addressed the issue of enforced or involuntary disappearances in its report on the 46th session, dated March 9th, 1990.¹⁸ The draft resolution included within the report condemned those responsible for torturing, murdering, forcibly disappearing, and extra-legally executing political dissidents, and urged the strengthening of policies and programs in the fields of human rights for the ultimate consolidation of democratic processes in the region of Latin America.

POTENTIAL BLOC INVOLVEMENT(S)/POSITION(S)

UNITED STATES

¹⁵ Hellinger, D. (2015). *Comparative politics of Latin America: Democracy at last?* (2nd ed., p. 235). Routledge.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/129599?ln=en>

¹⁸ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/90908?ln=en>

Although the United States had been involved in the demise of Allende's government, as General Pinochet's despotic control continued, it began to encourage a transition to civilian government. While some American conservative politicians had engaged with General Pinochet, reports began suggesting that the General was wearing out his welcome with President Reagan's administration.¹⁹

UNITED KINGDOM

Britain's initial reaction to the overthrow of Allende's government was one of caution. Although the Conservative government at the time recognized Pinochet's new regime as legitimate, it did not outrightly offer any other declarations of support. Britain regularly denounced the military junta for its human rights abuses at the United Nations, yet bilateral relations between the two nations were not necessarily weakened. It had been reported that Pinochet visited Margaret Thatcher for tea on more than one occasion.

REGIONAL NEIGHBORS

Various nations in the region experienced similar experiences with regimes that were indifferent to justice and human rights throughout the Cold War. In 1974, Cuba, Chile, Panama, Peru, and Bolivia ranked "Not Free" on the *Freedom in the World* scale. The bulk of the region consisted of poorly rated Partly Free countries that were unstable and vulnerable to coups and revolutions. Latin America, however, was among the first regions to experience the global political transformation known as the "third wave" of democratization. By the mid-1980s, Brazil and Argentina had made transitions to civilian rule. By the early 1990s, peace and democratic elections had come to conflict-scarred El Salvador and Nicaragua.²⁰

FOCUS QUESTIONS/COMMITTEE CONCERNS

- What sorts of cultural and/or political pillars are necessary to maintain the establishments of free democratic governments?
- How can such pillars be strengthened past the initial fervor associated with a transition from authoritarian to democratic governance?
- Should a form of lustration (the process by which government officials of a previous regime are purged) take place? Is this aspect of a regime change too volatile?
- Should the Security Council encourage the elimination of the 1981 constitution? Should it instead adopt a more moderate approach- advising that the Concertación government work to pass legislation that gradually alters the constitution's principles? Or should it suggest that Chile not touch the matter of the 1981 constitution at all yet, given the infancy of the civilian government?
- What should (or should not) be done about Pinochet's position as commander of the armed forces for the next decade?

¹⁹ Hellinger, D. (2015). *Comparative politics of Latin America: Democracy at last?* (2nd ed., p. 233). Routledge.

²⁰ <https://freedomhouse.org/article/latin-america-shows-democratization-possible-anywhere>

- How can the Security Council help boost Chile's international credibility and stability now that a civilian government has been established?
- How can the Security Council consider the deference given to the sovereignty of member states while also heeding to the importance of human rights?
- How can the committee ensure that Aylwin's democratically elected government will defend free government in the long term? What role(s) do critical aspects of such governance, like free and fair elections and peaceful transitions of power, play in the matter at hand?
- What countermeasure(s) can the committee develop to ensure similar transitions can be addressed and supported more effectively?
- How do present themes from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), primarily SDG 16, regarding the promotion of just and strong institutions, help positively inform insights on the matter before the committee?

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

- <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/peace-justice/>
- <https://b-ok.cc/book/3389471/3d9495> [Review pages 198, 200, 207-211, and 231-237- the author's analysis on the matter is extremely insightful. Feel free to email me if you have any difficulty accessing this resource].
- https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/inline_images/Chile.pdf
- <https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2019/04/committee-enforced-disappearances-examines-report-chile>
- <https://www.usip.org/publications/1990/05/truth-commission-chile-90>
- <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/90908?ln=en>

ON CITATIONS

Citations in position papers, for this conference and committee specifically, are not critical, yet still recommended to best facilitate delegates in their research. If delegates choose to utilize citations, delegates may choose to follow a specific citation format for purposes of consistency and style. Delegates may also simply choose to footnote the website/link, and/or other source where they obtained information (as executed above). **It is imperative that delegates use footnotes to ensure the paper flows well. Lacking footnotes chops the position paper in a manner that makes it difficult to read. Failure to follow the aforesaid considerations will negatively influence the position paper's score.**

KEEP THE FOLLOWING IN MIND

- Think of this background guide as the **starting point of your research**. Do not consider it your only source of information and knowledge for the matter at hand. Each delegation must further study the issue before the body to gain a more complete understanding of it. As a delegation, take initiative and further research how your representative member state has either contributed (or failed to contribute) to reaching an end to the issue.

- The matter laid out above is a complex and multifaceted issue. With that in mind, see to it that the committee's resolution(s) reflect that consideration. A comprehensive, far-reaching resolution may not be positively evaluated by the committee director if it is clear that the strategies within the resolution are neither practical nor clear. Accordingly, if delegations choose to create a multifaceted plan, ensure it is well-written, well-developed, and clear. Specific and concise resolutions, for example those predominantly addressing how the government may choose to combat economic inequality in Chile amidst the transitional period, are certainly not discouraged.