

AMMAN ACADEMY MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2026



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Kremlin Black Directorate (KBD)



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AAMUN'26



Dear Delegates,

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COMMITTEE

The events of 1983 have brought relations between the Soviet Union and the West to one of their most dangerous points since the beginning of the Cold War. The deployment of new American nuclear weapons in Europe, growing military tensions, and NATO's Able Archer 83 exercise have intensified concerns within the Soviet leadership over the intentions of the United States and its allies. From the Kremlin's perspective, distinguishing between routine military activity and preparations for an actual attack has become increasingly difficult. At the same time, any miscalculation could trigger a chain of events with consequences far beyond the immediate issue. The Kremlin Black Directorate must therefore navigate the growing threat of nuclear confrontation while protecting Soviet security, evaluating intelligence, managing internal disagreements, and determining how the USSR should respond to an increasingly unpredictable West.



INTRODUCTION

The Kremlin Black Directorate (KBD) is a crisis committee, set within the Kremlin itself as of the year 1983, where delegates represent members of the Soviet government. In November 1983, tensions between the Soviet Union and the West have reached a dangerous new height. NATO has launched Able Archer 83, a large-scale military exercise involving highly realistic nuclear command procedures. Soviet intelligence has become increasingly convinced that the exercise could be masking preparations for a real attack on the USSR. With contradictory intelligence reports, unusual NATO military activity, and a missing Soviet intelligence asset in Western Europe, the Kremlin must determine whether the West is preparing for war, conducting an exercise, or deliberately attempting to provoke Moscow. The members of the KBD must now utilize their critical thinking, creativity, and debate skills to determine the appropriate course of action and decide how the Soviet Union will respond to the threat.

The situation becomes increasingly complicated when reports from across the Soviet intelligence and the military begin to contradict each other. Some intelligence shows NATO operations are consistent with a typical drill, while others indicate unusual activity and changes in Western military protocols and readiness. To make matters worse, a Soviet intelligence asset has disappeared in Western Europe, triggering the KBD to reconsider the



credibility of their intelligence. Nuclear forces are on high alert, and any misinterpretation of the West's intentions might trigger something much bigger and more dangerous.

The threat is not limited to what is happening outside of the Soviet border. There are political tensions arising within the KBD itself, as different members have opposing views on how Moscow should respond. Military authorities may suggest more defense mechanisms, while diplomatic officials may argue for communication with the West to prevent escalation. Thus, delegates will have to balance the security of the Soviet Union with the risk of overreacting, while simultaneously dealing with internal conflicts, insufficient information, and the weight that their decisions carry in whether the conflict ends in nuclear war.

Delegates will also be assigned secret agendas throughout the committee, which are essentially individual objectives that they must attempt to achieve by the end of the conference. These may conflict with the interests of the wider government, and are often difficult to complete. These agendas will require delegates to think strategically in order to pursue their goals in addition to the goals of the committee, without revealing their true intentions to the rest of the KBD.



The KBD will operate on directives, which are texts or short documents used to propose a specific action.

Directives can include ordering an investigation, military allocations, creating alliances, and much more. Directives will be used within the committee in order for delegates to address and respond to the crisis at hand, and attempt to achieve their secret agendas.

TIMELINE

1945: The Cold War Begins

World War II ends, but the US and USSR quickly become rivals. Both countries have very different political systems and begin competing for influence around the world. They also start expanding their military and nuclear capabilities, creating a growing fear of conflict between the two sides.

1949: NATO is Created

The US and several Western European countries create NATO as a military alliance. The alliance is meant to protect its members from potential attacks and strengthen military cooperation between them. The Soviet Union sees NATO as a growing military threat and becomes increasingly concerned about its presence in Europe.

1955: The Warsaw Pact is Created

The Soviet Union and several Eastern European countries form the Warsaw Pact. It becomes the main military



alliance of eastern Europe and is largely created as a response to NATO. The two alliances now divide much of Europe into opposing ideologies.

1962: Cuban Missile Crisis

The USSR places nuclear missiles in Cuba, leading to a confrontation with the US that nearly ends in nuclear war. For several days, both sides prepare for the possibility of a military conflict.

1979: Tensions Rise Again

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and NATO's decision to deploy new nuclear missiles in Europe causes relations between the USSR and the West to worsen. Both sides become more suspicious of each other, while nuclear weapons remain a major part of their military strategies.

1981: Operation RYAN Begins

The KGB begins Operation RYAN to watch for signs of a possible Western nuclear attack. Soviet intelligence starts paying closer attention to NATO military activity, changes in military exercises, and other possible signs of an attack. The program reflects growing Soviet fears that the West could launch a surprise nuclear strike.

1983: Relations Continue to Worsen

Military activity and tensions between the US and USSR continue to increase throughout the year. Soviet intelligence becomes especially focused on Western



military exercises and unusual activity, as even normal NATO operations can appear threatening in the current situation. This makes it harder for Soviet leaders to tell the difference between routine military activity and genuine preparations for war.

November 1983: Able Archer 83

NATO begins Able Archer 83, a large military exercise simulating the procedures used during a nuclear war. The exercise is more realistic than many previous exercises, and Soviet intelligence becomes concerned about NATO's intentions. With Soviet forces on alert and intelligence reports giving conflicting information, the exercise creates serious concerns within the Soviet government.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Cold War: NATO vs. the Soviet Union

The Cold War was a period of political, ideological, and military competition between the United States of America (USA) and the Soviet Union (USSR) that began after the Second World War. Although the two superpowers never fought a full war against one another, they constantly competed for global influence through military alliances, propaganda, and espionage. This constant struggle for global influence divided the world into mainly two separate parts. The capitalist Western bloc led by the United States and the communist Eastern bloc led by the Soviet Union.



This was the cause of NATO's creation in 1949 which was the joining of the USA, Canada, and multiple Western European countries together under a defence agreement to protect themselves from the Soviet Union. The direct response of the Soviet Union in the upcoming years to the creation of NATO was the creation of the Warsaw Pact, which was a Pact that brought together the USSR and several communist states in Eastern Europe. These two alliances built up large military forces throughout Europe, creating the possibility that any major confrontation would be quickly spread across the continent.

Nuclear Arms Race

One of the most important factors that shaped the Cold War was nuclear weapons. After the USA first used nuclear bombs against Japan, the Soviet Union ended up developing an nuclear bomb of its own. After this major event both countries focused on the expansion of their nuclear arsenal so as not to fall behind in military strength.

This rapid development in nuclear weapons created the concept of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD). This was the idea that if a superpower launched a nuclear attack the other would still have enough weapons to fight back and destroy the other country. This concept was very useful as it was not only used to fight a war but it was also used to stop one from happening.



However, a big weakness in deterring a war was that it heavily depended on both sides believing that the other would not launch a surprise attack. This meant that military exercises, troop movements, missile deployments, and changes in nuclear readiness could be interpreted as preparations for war. For this reason a misunderstanding could be extremely dangerous as war could be waged off of misinterpretation.

The Cuban Missile Crisis

The Cuban Missile Crisis made the dangers of nuclear confrontations very clear as the Soviet Union placed nuclear missiles in Cuba around 90 miles away from the USA. This, after being discovered by the USA, led President John F. Kennedy's administration to confront the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev for several days.

The crisis was eventually resolved through negotiations with one of the conditions being the Soviet Union removing their missiles from Cuba and the USA giving some things up of its own. The crisis showed how quickly a political confrontation could turn into a nuclear crisis and allowed for growth in connections to prevent war.

The Return of Cold War Tensions

Relations between the USA and the Soviet Union improved during the 1970s. When both sides signed agreements to limit specific nuclear weapons and reduce the possibility of direct confrontation.



By the end of the 1970s, the relaxed state began to collapse as the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, which led to strong international response which worsened the relationship between the countries. The USA increased its support for fighting the Soviet backed Afghan government turning Afghanistan into another arena of the Cold War.

At the same time, NATO and the Warsaw Pact continued to maintain large military forces in Europe, and the USA and Soviet Union continued developing new nuclear weapons and delivery systems which left Europe heavily armed meaning a conflict between the two alliances could become nuclear.

The 1980s: Growing Suspicion

When Ronald Reagan became President of the USA in 1981 relations with the Soviet Union became hostile as Reagan increased American defense spending. While describing the Soviet Union as a major threat to the West.

This led the Soviet leadership to become concerned that the USA might be preparing for a war against the USSR which contributed to the KGB's Operation RYAN, which began in 1981. RYAN was designed to identify warning signs that Western countries might be preparing for a nuclear attack. Which made the Soviet intelligence pay very close attention to military activity, changes in nuclear readiness, political decisions, and military exercises.



This created a dangerous problem: the Soviet Union was looking for evidence of a possible attack at the same time that NATO was conducting realistic military exercises. Actions intended as training could be interpreted as preparation for an actual attack by Soviet intelligence.

The 1983 Crisis

By November 1983, the relationship between the Soviet Union and the USA was extremely tense. Soviet leaders had to make decisions based on the intelligence that they had which was usually incomplete or contradictory. At the same time, both sides had very large nuclear arsenals and had only a limited time to respond if they believed an attack was on the way.

This is the environment in which Able Archer 83 takes place. NATO's exercise involves communications and procedures associated with a nuclear conflict and appeared more realistic than many previous exercises. For Soviet officials who were already concerned about Operation RYAN and Western intentions, the exercise made it possible for using military drills to conceal preparations for an actual attack.

The central problem facing the Kremlin is not simply "Is NATO attacking?" It is whether Soviet leaders can accurately distinguish between a genuine attack, a military exercise, a political provocation, or a dangerous



misunderstanding. Every possible response has a consequence. But taking no action could leave the USSR vulnerable to attack, while responding aggressively could cause the situation to escalate into a war that the leadership is trying to prevent.

PARTIES INVOLVED

KGB

The KGB is responsible for Soviet intelligence and internal security. In the context of the crisis, the KGB is particularly important because of Operation RYAN, which attempts to detect signs of a possible Western nuclear attack. KGB officials must determine whether intelligence suggesting an attack is credible or whether Soviet agents are misinterpreting normal NATO activity.

NATO

NATO represents the main Western military alliance opposing the Warsaw Pact. Its forces are concentrated across Western Europe and include the United States and major European powers such as the United Kingdom, France, and West Germany. NATO's military exercises and nuclear strategy are central to the crisis because Soviet intelligence must determine whether unusual activity is simply part of military training or something more serious.

Soviet Intelligence Community (GRU)

The GRU is a Soviet military intelligence service, which provides intelligence about foreign military forces and



activities. Its information can be compared with KGB reports to determine what NATO forces are actually doing. Conflicting reports between intelligence agencies can create disagreements within the KBD and give delegates opportunities to challenge the reliability of different sources.

United States

The United States is the leading military and political power within NATO and the Soviet Union's primary rival. The Reagan administration is increasing American military capabilities and maintaining a strong position against the USSR. Soviet leaders must determine whether American actions are defensive, intended to pressure Moscow, or part of preparations for a larger conflict.

Warsaw Pact

The Warsaw Pact is the Soviet-led military alliance in Eastern Europe. Its member states provide the USSR with strategic depth and military forces positioned close to NATO. Countries such as East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia are particularly important because much of the potential confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact would occur in Central Europe.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)



The USSR is the central state involved in the crisis and the country represented by the Kremlin Black Directorate. As a global superpower, it seeks to protect its territory, maintain its nuclear deterrent, and prevent NATO from gaining a strategic advantage. During Able Archer 83, Soviet leaders must decide how to respond to the perceived threat without accidentally triggering nuclear war.

GLOSSARY

The Kremlin: The Kremlin is a group of buildings in the center of Moscow that serves as the official residence of the Russian government. It also serves as a potent symbol of Russia itself, and is often used to refer to the Russian government.

NATO: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a military alliance consisting of the United States, Canada, and several Western European countries. Its members agree to defend one another if one of them is attacked.

KGB: The KGB is the Soviet Union's main intelligence and security organization. It gathers intelligence from inside and outside the USSR, investigates potential threats, and is responsible for protecting the Soviet state from espionage and other dangers.

Able Archer 83: Able Archer 83 is a NATO military exercise taking place in November 1983. It is designed to practice the procedures NATO would use during a nuclear conflict.



The exercise is unusually realistic, which causes some Soviet officials to question whether it could be hiding preparations for a real attack.

MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction): Mutually Assured Destruction is the idea that a nuclear war between the US and USSR would result in the destruction of both sides. Because both countries had enough nuclear weapons to retaliate after an attack, neither side could launch a nuclear war without risking its own destruction. This idea shaped the foreign and military policies of both countries for much of the Cold War.

Operation RYAN: Operation RYAN was a KGB program started in 1981 to detect signs that the US and its allies were preparing for a nuclear attack against the Soviet Union. It involved gathering information on Western military activity, government decisions, and other possible signs of a first strike to accurately assess the risks posed by potential nuclear attacks.

HELPFUL LINKS

Historical account (what actually happened): [1983: Year of Cold War Peril - Veterans Breakfast Club](#)

Soviet-USA relations: [U.S.-Soviet Relations, 1981–1991](#)

NATO vs Warsaw Pact: [NATO and the Warsaw Pact | History of Western Civilization II](#)



The Able Archer 83: The 1983 Military Drill That Nearly Sparked Nuclear War With the Soviets

Soviet Nuclear Doctrine (explanation): The Hidden Side of the U.S.-Russian Strategic Confrontation | Arms Control Association

Cold War: Cold War | Dates, Definition, Timeline, Summary, Era, & Facts | Britannica

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