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IES Sierra Nevada



INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS An Audiovisual Journey Throughout History

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27th March 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Introduction
- 1. Definition
- 2. Causes
- 3. Conflict Resolution Approaches
- 4. International Conflicts that could have changed History

TEACHER-LED GROUP

Introduction

Since origins of humanity, the human being has constantly fought to obtain and to accumulate resources, therefore conflicts and wars have been present along History.

- **Throughout Antiquity:** Trojan Wars (1250 BC), Servile Wars (135-71 BC) ...
- **Throughout Medieval Ages:** The Hundred Years War (1337-1453), the Crusades, First War of Scottish Independence (1296-1328) ...
- **Throughout Early Modern Ages:** the conquest of America, the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) ...
- **Throughout Modern Ages:** World Wars (1914-1918 /1939-1945), the Cold War (1947-1989), the Yugoslav Wars (1991-2001) ...
- **Today:** Civil War in Syria (2011-Today), Criminal Violence in Mexico, North Korea Crisis (2013), Civil War in Libya (2011) ...

Despite it has not being its priority, human being always tried to maintain peace by passing laws to avoid conflicts (Hammurabi Code (1750 BC), Magna Carta (1215), International Human Rights Declaration (1948) ...).

1. Definition

Some definitions by the Collins Dictionary:

1. A struggle or clash between opposing forces; battle.
2. A state of opposition between ideas, interests, etc.; disagreement or controversy.
4. Psychology opposition between two simultaneous but incompatible wishes or drives, sometimes leading to a state of emotional tension and thought to be responsible for neuroses.

The definition of conflicts has changed:

- a) Traditionally: Conflicts between different states or nations. Conflicts between people or organizations of different states or nations.

“Why don’t you shut up?” Venezuela-Spain incident (2007).

- b) Today: It also includes conflicts within one country, for instance when a part is fighting for its independence.

Catalonian Conflict (2010-Today).

A conflict becomes a war when one or both human groups decide to use weapons against the other one because an acute of the problem. So, war is a violent way to solve a conflict. The concept war is reserved to armed conflicts in which at least 1.000 people die.

Frequently, human beings have been trying to present war as an act of justice. However, it has not always been so. Trojan War was not caused by the abduction of Helen, it was caused because of economic interest (to end with Trojan commercial power).

Private International Conflicts Vs Public International Conflicts

a) Private International Conflicts: private international conflicts involve conflicts between individual and/or businesses coming from two different countries. They are not usually easy to handle therefore to avoid jurisdictional disputes they try to solve their conflicts through arbitration.

b) Public International Conflicts: As we said before, this concept was reserved to conflicts between different sovereign states. But today we also use it to talk about internal conflicts because despite traditionally international community did not interfere in “internal disputes”, today this has changed because of the new values and human costs of some of these conflicts.

2. Causes

There are thousands of reasons for a conflict: lands, power, glory, love, etc.

2.1. Politic Origin

We can distinguish conflicts between bordering countries and conflicts between separatist territories.

a. Conflicts between bordering countries

a.1. Disagreement with the drawn of a border.

Gibraltar (1713-Today).

a.2. Attempt of annexing of a territory from another country.

Crimean Crisis (2014-Today).

a.3. Migrations

US-Mexico border wall (2017-Today).

b. Conflicts between separatist territories. There are many European Nationalisms

Northern Ireland Conflict (1960s-1998)

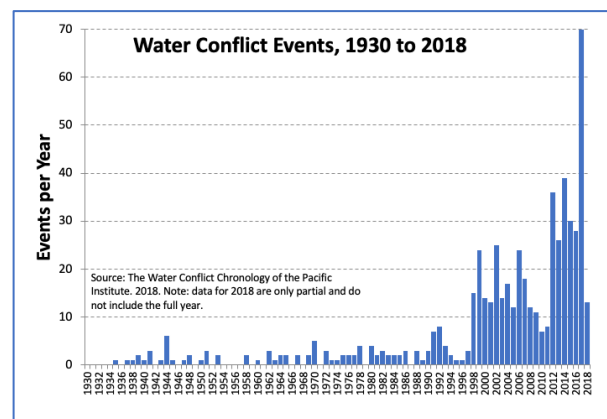
2.2. Economic Origin

Controlling Natural resources: soil, oil, timber, diamonds, water, coal...

Gulf War (1990-1991).

Water Conflict: “The Water Conflict Chronology is the world’s most comprehensive open-source database on water-related violence. Created by the Pacific Institute in the 1980s, it includes all known verified instances where water and water systems trigger conflicts; they are used as weapons in conflicts; or are they are targets or casualties of violence.”

(<https://pacinst.org/>)



Venezuelan Crisis

a) Key factors:

- Abundant natural resources (discovery of oil in 1910).
- Oil as the basis of its economy (exporting oil and importing basic goods).
- Dictatorships before 1958.
- Social inequality (high percentage of illiterates).

b) Chavism

Hugo Chavez (1998-2013)

- Failed 1992 Coup.
- Electoral victory in 1998 (socialist political program), 2002 (anti-Americanism) and 2007 (rise in oil prices).
- George Bush declares Venezuela as part of an axis of evil.
- New Crisis: devastating drought (serious consequences in agriculture and in the production of energy).

c) 2019 Venezuelan Crisis

Nicolás Maduro (2013-Today)

- Continued Hugo Chavez socialist politics measures.
- Rise in External debt and hyperinflation.
- Numerous political prisoners.

Juan Guaidó (2019-Today)

- He was elected President of the National Assembly of Venezuela in December 2018.
- Guaidó has hold the acting presidency, based on Article 233 of the Constitution of Venezuela, been recognized by more than 50 governments.

3. Resolution Approaches

International conflicts **can be resolved by international bodies**, like the United Nations, but actually it doesn't happen frequently.

How does the UN maintain international peace and security?

Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation

The most effective way to diminish human suffering and the massive economic costs of conflicts and their aftermath is to prevent conflicts in the first place. The United Nations plays an important role in conflict prevention, using diplomacy, good offices and mediation. Among the tools the Organization uses to bring peace are special envoys and political missions in the field.

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping has proven to be one of the most effective tools available to the UN to assist host countries navigate the difficult path from conflict to peace. Today's multidimensional peacekeeping operations are called upon not only to maintain peace and security, but also to facilitate political processes, protect civilians, assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; support constitutional processes and the organization of elections, protect and promote human rights and assist in restoring the rule of law and extending legitimate state authority. Peacekeeping operations get their mandates from the UN Security Council; their troops and police are contributed by Members States; and they are managed by the Department of Peace Operations and supported by the Department of Operational Support at the UN Headquarters in New York. There are 14 UN peacekeeping operations currently deployed and there have been a total of 71 deployed since 1948.

Peacebuilding

United Nations peacebuilding activities are aimed at assisting countries emerging from conflict, reducing the risk of relapsing into conflict and at laying the foundation for sustainable peace and development. The UN peacebuilding architecture comprises the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office. The Peacebuilding Support Office assists and supports the Peacebuilding Commission with strategic advice and policy guidance, administers the Peacebuilding Fund and serves the Secretary-General in coordinating United Nations agencies in their peacebuilding efforts.

Countering Terrorism

The United Nations is being increasingly called upon to coordinate the global fight against terrorism. Eighteen universal instruments against international terrorism have been elaborated within the framework of the United Nations system relating to specific terrorist activities. In September 2006, UN Member States adopted the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. This was the first time that Member States agreed to a common strategic and operational framework against terrorism.

Disarmament

The General Assembly and other bodies of the United Nations, supported by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, work to advance international peace and security through the pursuit of the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and the regulation of conventional arms.

[<http://www.un.org/>]

To avoid violence, we can use diplomacy (international conferences), international mediators (from the U.N., from third party nations, members of peace churches...), armed peacekeepers or unarmed soldiers or civilians.

Camp David Accords (1978).

Countries: Israel and Egypt; Origin: Arab-Israeli conflict; Mediator: Jimmy Carter; Signers: Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

Arab-Israeli Conflict (1948-Today)

Cyprus dispute (1974-Today)

Syria Civil War (2011-Today)

BREXIT (1975/2016-Today)

4. International Conflicts that could have changed History

Since Antiquity there have occurred different wars which could have changed History.

- ✓ The Battle of Salamis (480 BC). This war, between Greeks and Persians, could have ended European culture and, therefore, what we call Western Civilisation.
- ✓ The Battle of Poitiers (732 AD). This war, between Frankish and Muslims, could have changed European culture and its religion.
- ✓ The Siege of Vienna (1529 AD). This war, between the Christian imperial troops and the Muslim Ottoman army, could also have changed the European culture and the European religion.

Activities

1. Which are the differences between a conflict and an international conflict?

2. What type of conflict becomes into a war?

3. Name two international conflicts caused by conflicts between bordering countries and two international conflicts caused by separatist territories.

4. Explain briefly the main factor of the Venezuelan and Catalanian Crisis.

5. Elaborate your own definition of "International Conflict".

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- Quackenbus, Stephen L., *International Conflicts: Logic and Evidence*.
- *Spartacus and the Slave War. A History from beginning to end*, Hourly History.

b. Webography

- <https://www.beyondintractability.org/coreknowledge/international-conflict>
- Conflict definition: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/conflict>
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- Catalonia crisis: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41584864>
- 2019 Venezuelan Presidential Crisis: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019_Venezuelan_presidential_crisis

c. Video Links

- Spartacus. "I'm Spartacus" (by Stanley Kubrick, 1960): https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=FKCmyiljKoQ
- Spartacus, Official Trailer (by Stanley Kubrick, 1960): https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=HcIMY1Ah3aw
- Spartacus. The War of the Damned -Official Trailer- (by Michael Hurst, Rick Jacobson and Jesse Warn, 2013): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptX_pjz5s2k
- The Spartacus Wars: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMHo4WmOXh8>
- Braveheart (20th Anniversary Limited Edition Collection): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgyDjYES33g>
- Alatraste -UK trailer- (by Agustín Díaz Yanes, 2006): <https://vimeo.com/122079823>
- One, by Metallica (And Justice for All, 1988): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WM8bTdBs-cw>
- Yugoslav Wars: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=SjpxPEGTVpA
- "Shut up" incident: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3Kzbo7tNLg>
- Saving Private Ryan (by Steven Spielberg, 1998): https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=8&v=DSKerypwUDM

- Troy (Original Theatrical Trailer, 2004):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=6FG3BfPuwBA
- Northern Ireland Conflict:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=1kR11vn41XU
- Patriot Games (by Phillip Noyce, 1992):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tj_MogVoy8k
- BREXIT: <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-politics-44971523/hard-brexit-soft-brexit-no-deal-what-does-brexit-mean>
- BREXIT and Northern Ireland: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cfI5on5n84>
- Mad Max. Fury Road (George Miller, 2015):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=102&v=aBD30p1tUgg
- Cyprus Dispute: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fFBCdeDdt>

d. Multimedia Links

- Conflicts around the world: <https://www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker#!/global-conflict-tracker>
- Nationalism in Europe: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2017/oct/27/beyond-catalonia-pro-independence-movements-in-europe-map>