

# NAMUN'20 RUSREV STUDY GUIDE

#JointheWorldsHeartbeat



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## **Welcoming Letters**

### **Letter from Secretary-General**

Highly esteemed participants of Nesibe Aydın Model United Nations 2020 Online Conference, NAMUN'20,

I am more than honoured to welcome you all to the 9th annual session of NAMUN. This year, unlike past years' conferences, NAMUN'20 will be held online due to the ongoing pandemic. Our conference has been endeavoring to encourage delegates both socially and academically through an inclusive simulation of the United Nations with unprecedented committees and agendas to enhance our delegates' eagerness and enthusiasm to speak up.

Both our academic and organisation team have been working diligently to give you the NAMUN quality and abate the concerns about NAMUN being online. We did our best to make that online conference similar to face-to-face conferences as much as possible. Therefore; we could not discard some characteristics of MUN such as placards, fun activities in coffee breaks, Q&A sessions with our keynote speakers, et cetera.

This year in NAMUN'20, we have six committees which are UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), IOC (International Olympics Committee), UNCSTD (United Nations Commission on

Science and Technology for Development), NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) and last but not least our historical crisis committee RUSREV 17' (Russian Revolution 1917). All of our committees' agenda items had been decided according to the original organisation committees' policies. Additionally; all of our committees', except RUSREV 17', agenda items are focusing on debating upon Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations.

RUSREV 17' is a historical crisis committee that will be harder for delegates since delegates will not be representing any country, instead, they will be representing people from that time and have to be careful to not involve their ideas and feelings to these people. There will be crises that will shape the committee and delegates' opinions. I would like to thank our academic assistants, Arda Gürcan and Kuzey Özbakır, our Under-Secretary-General, Zeynep Ağca, and our crisis team who worked simultaneously for this committee.

It is my utmost wish to see all those who attend will reach their aims with remarkable knowledge and memories. Additionally, I would like to thank every participant for supporting MUN conferences with their contribution and determination during the pandemic and staying safe.

We as the NAMUN'20 team are looking forward to meeting all of you!

Secretary-General of NAMUN'20

Nil Hamavioğlu

## **Letter from Under-Secretary-General**

Distinguished participants,

My name is Zeynep Ağca and I will be serving as the Under-Secretary General of the RUSREV'17 committee. I am an 11<sup>th</sup> grader studying in the Pakistan Embassy International Study Group, based in Ankara.

I started attending Model UN conferences 2 years ago as I started high school. The reason I started was learning more about diplomacy but I acquired far more than that knowledge- I made many great friends and improved my public speaking abilities immensely. MUN gives me the opportunity to socialize and enjoy as an out of school activity. Apart from attending conferences I like to paint and listen to music among other things.

Without a doubt, my favourite type of committees are crisis committees – both joint-crisis committees and crisis committees, whether it be historical, futuristic, or present-timed. The reason being that crisis committees are very thrilling in my opinion. The quick-thinking, teamwork, and also espionage to name a few are some of the reasons I am inclined towards crisis committees. Being a delegate in these committees is always a joy and I hope I can contribute to your experience positively.

What I expect from you delegates is for you to understand the ideologies of your character and put yourself in their shoes. Think of the time period and what the socioeconomic conditions were. When you are making decisions leave your own thoughts behind and think like your character; what would they do in a crisis like

the ones you will receive? And most importantly, do not forget to have fun! Crisis committees are supposed to be for you to use your imagination and quick-thinking skills. They are meant for you to learn how to establish a line between being serious but also understanding that you are creating the future relative to the beginning of the committee.

Finally I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my academic assistants Arda Gürcan and Kuzey Özbakır for their hard work and dedication when preparing the study guide.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me through my email [zzagca@outlook.com](mailto:zzagca@outlook.com). Start your preparation and may you create the best future you can.

Sincerely,

Zeynep Ağca.

## **1. Introduction to Russian Revolution (RUSREV)**

### **1.1. What is the Russian Revolution?**

The Russian Revolution commenced on International Women's Day of 1917 in consequence of outrage at Tsar Nicholas II for joining World War I leading to major losses and a shortage of food. Workers had started announcing strikes in Petrograd, known today as Saint Petersburg. Demonstrators and workers joined a protest criticizing the rationing. The army was deployed, albeit it turned out most of the army supported the rebellion and refused to open fire. The

Tsar renounced his throne concluding the Tsarist autocracy. A term of dual power followed, with the government being run by two parties: The Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet.

Remaining in the war the public was disappointed with the provisional government and at the night connecting the 24th of October to the 25th there was another revolution. The October Revolution, also known as The Bolshevik Revolution, was a coup d'état in which the Bolsheviks attacked the Winter Palace and overtook the government. In the following years, the Russian Civil War would begin.

## **2. Russia at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Russia has had an extraordinary history in the twentieth century. It is an extraordinarily lucid, masterful account of the most complex and turbulent period in Russia's long history. In many ways, Russia is the touchstone of the twentieth century. Most of the main features of our troubled age have impinged on it more heavily than any other single country. In terms of events, the holocaust; two world wars; revolution; civil war; the collapse of empire (twice); autocratic tyranny; pitiless, bureaucratically organised terror; and the cold war have left a scar upon scar.

## **2.1. The 1905 Russian Revolution**

The Russian Revolution of 1905 was also known as the "First Russian Revolution", was a wave of mass political and social unrest that spread through vast areas of the Russian Empire, some of which were directed at the government. It included worker strikes, peasant unrest, and military mutinies. It led to constitutional reform including the establishment of the multi-party system, and the Russian Constitution of 1906.

There were 4 problems that ignited the First Russian Revolution. Newly emancipated peasants earned too little and were not allowed to sell or mortgage their allotted land. Ethnic and national minorities resented the government. It practiced discrimination and repression against national minorities such as taking their vote permission. Finally, university students developed a new consciousness, after discipline was relaxed in the institutions, and they were fascinated by increasingly radical ideas, which spread among them.

Taken individually, these issues might not have affected the course of Russian history, but together they created the conditions for a potential revolution.

Farming and agrarian were not fair before 1905. Nobles and the government would get better products and the farmers' money. On the top of it, they started to sell the fields Farmers were using for agrarian. While the peasants were starving the situation got worse.



Russia was a multi-ethnic empire but Russians won't respect non-Russian cultures and religions despite tolerating them. The Russification backfired when the Jews became more than a "special problem" for the Russian Government.

Russia also had a huge labour problem before the revolution. The Finance Minister couldn't handle his job, the economy was going downhill. Taxes were too high for the workers so they united and struck the government.

Russia's educated class was also a problem for the Government. As universities expanded, there was a rapid growth of newspapers, journals, and an organization of public lectures and professional societies. The 1860s was a time when the emergence of a new public sphere was created in social life and professional groups. This created the idea of their right to have an independent opinion. The government's authority was collapsing so that the student radicalism began and kept growing.

## **2.2. World War I**

The Great War started in 1914 and lasted for 4 years. The event that ignited the war was an assassination. The heir presumptive of Austria-Hungary and his wife got assassinated by a group of Serbians. After the assassination, the whole of Europe got dragged to war. There were 2 fronts which were "The Triple Entente" comprised the British Empire, Russia, and France; and "The Central Powers" comprised Austria-Hungary, Germany, Italy, Bulgaria (and

Ottoman Empire later on). War continued sharply for 4 years. When the war was over in 1918, Russia still had storages and manpower for the after-effects. However, a civil war began right after the Great War.

### **3. February Revolution**

The February Revolution occurred in February of 1917 according to the Julian calendar used at the time (March Gregorian Calendar). A workers' strike, considered to be the first protest of the revolution, took place on 18 February (3 March G.C.). Thousands of workers took to the streets gathering in front of the Putilov industrial plant in Petrograd (Modern St. Petersburg), the largest in Russia. Four days later on February 22 (7 March G.C.), many metal workers went on strike leading to the shutting down of nearly all the industry in Petrograd. People calling for an end to rationing, and World War 1 were joined by women celebrating the next day, International Women's Day. The protesters, however, were unable to come to terms with a common plan not causing the usual alarm by the authorities. Despite being non-organized, the following day, there were reported to be more than 100,000 workers, a third of the city's workforce, protesting on the streets. Students and members of the middle class joined the protests and on 26 February (11 March G.C.) soldiers were assigned to fire at the crowd. However, starting with the Volynskii regiment most of the units mutinied.

A revolution had arisen yet until the 27th no revolutionary party had stepped up to take leadership. The Mensheviks, a faction of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP), called for the workers and soldiers to elect delegates to a soviet. Hence forming the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. On 2 March (15 March G.C.) Nicholas abdicated and the 300 year Romanov dynasty was brought to an end. The next day the дума, an elected semi-representative body formed after the 1905 revolution, established a provisional government that would prompt an era of dual power.

### **3.1. International Women's Day**

*“23 February (8 March) was International Women's Day and meetings and actions were foreseen. But we did not imagine that this 'Women's Day' would inaugurate the revolution. Revolutionary actions were foreseen but without date. But in the morning, despite the orders to the contrary, textile workers left their work in several factories and sent delegates to ask for the government's support of the strike... which led to a mass strike... all went out into the streets.”*

-Leon Trotsky

The women played a big role in the revolution by commencing protests demanding “Bread and Peace” on International Women's Day 1917. Following the February Revolution, women gained suffrage and after the October Revolution, Vladimir Lenin adopted the day as an official holiday. Primarily

celebrated by the socialist movement and communist countries, the day was later adopted by the feminism movement in 1967.

#### **4. An Era of Dual Power**

During the period between the February Revolution and the October Revolution, there was a competition of power between the two forces which brought down the monarchy: the Petrograd Soviets and the Provisional Government. The Provisional Government, led by a landowner, widely represented the interest of the bourgeoisie and failed to act upon the public's initial demands revolving around the war and land. The Provisional Government, on the other hand, had the real attributes of influence. They controlled the army, transport, and communication. Despite being pressed by few to assume total power, they persisted as not to bring about a counter-revolution. Consequently, they supported yet didn't join the bourgeois Provisional Government so long as their interests didn't conflict. Regardless of the dual power's strong presence in Petrograd, outside the city, it was mostly absent. The power was mostly devolved to localities considerably diminishing the Provisional Government's effectiveness.

##### **4.1. Vladimir Lenin and his Return from Exile**

Vladimir Lenin, also known by his family name Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, was born to an averagely wealthy on 22 April 1880. His elder brother, Aleksandr Ilyich Ulyanov attempted the assassination of Alexander III but failed and was hanged. Consequently, Lenin espoused revolutionary socialist ideas and became

a Marxist activist ultimately leading to his exile in 1897. Taking part in the RSDLP, he led the Bolshevik faction against the Mensheviks. 16 years after his exile, on April 3, he returned to Russia and on his way, he wrote the April Theses, drafting the Bolsheviks plans. Essentially, he called for an absolute Soviet government and therefore the overthrow of the Provisional Government. With Lenin's leadership, the popularity of the party greatly increased from a membership of 10,000 in March to nearly 400,000 by October.

## **5. The October Revolution**

On October 6<sup>th</sup> the government called for half the military to move out of the capital to defend it from the Germans. The Soviets, viewing it as an effort to diminish the revolution in the capital, formed a Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC) to maintain the military's current position and gave orders against those of Kerensky. Trotsky saw the opportunity when on 23 October, Kerensky gave the command to shut down the Bolshevik press as a prelude to defying MRC and on 24 October gave the command to the Red Guards, paramilitary forces working under MRC, to initiate the revolution by capturing strategic points such as bridges and railway stations. By the morning of the next day the White Palace, which had been repurposed as a seat of the Provisional Government, was captured in a rather bloodless coup d'état.

### **5.1. The Aftermath**

In the afternoon, Lenin, making his first appearance in public since July, gave a speech stating the end of the Provisional Government and the beginning of a “proletarian socialist state”. The Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries walked out of the Congress, anticipating the insurrection would lead to a civil war. After the seizure of power, there was an anticipation of a utopian new world offering equality, justice; where the workers, peasants, and soldiers made decisions about their country. Determined to differentiate themselves from the Provisional Government, the Bolsheviks issued more than 116 decrees regarding various issues including peace, land, several reforms, etc. Yet they were hesitant if it was possible to establish socialism as they lacked the proper resources and the country was torn. They hoped that the end of the war would bring about revolutions in other countries and although a few empires came to an end; even in Germany, an industrial country with an organized working class, there wasn't such a revolution.

Following the Decree of Peace, the newly formed government called on the Allied Powers to begin peace negotiations. However, the allies declined, leaving little choice for Russia but to sign a separate treaty with Germany. Initially declining the treaty due to its harsh terms, after a 700,000 troop attack by the Germans met almost no defence, the treaty was accepted with even tougher terms. The Brest-Litovsk treaty was signed on 3 March 1918 and although containing mediocre economic terms, in terms of land Russia had to give up the

Baltic provinces, and a large part of Belorussia and Ukraine; parting with most of the nation's natural resources including oil, cotton, coal, and iron.

Regarding the Decree of Land, the land was given to the peasants under SR's policy rather than the Bolsheviks' policy of taking land into state ownership.

## **5.2. The Beginning of a Civil War**

The seizure of power was expected to bring about an establishment representing all the parties in the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union. However, Lenin established Sovnarkom consisting of 15 members all of which were Bolsheviks. Promptly, 5 members resigned considering a purely Bolshevik Government sustainable by only using political terror. Before the revolution, the Provisional Government had planned on holding an election for the Constituent Assembly in November. Lenin believed soviet power should directly be based on the choices of the public and decided to go ahead with the election on 12 November 1917.

48.4 million votes were cast, with the SRs gaining 19.1 million, the Bolsheviks 10.9 million, the Kadets 2.2 million, and the Mensheviks 1.5 million. The Constituent Assembly opened on 5 January and was closed by Bolshevik soldiers after only a single session but the delegates were not going to allow a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' in place of parliamentary democracy and beginning with spring 1918 a civil war would ensue.

## 6. Questions to be Covered

1. What actions should be taken against the Anti-Bolshevik movement and their support from the Allies?
2. Which economic policy should be chosen going forward: socialism, capitalism, or communism?
3. What should be done with the Tsar and his family?
4. Should a backup plan be prepared due to Lenin's deteriorating health?

## 7. Helpful Links and References

- [What was the Russian revolution? - CBBC Newsround](#)
- [The Russian Revolution Timeline – The British Library](#)
- [From Tsar to USSR: Russia's Chaotic Year of Revolution](#)
- [The Russian Revolution, A Very Short Introduction \(S. A. Smith\)](#)
- [The Russian Revolution, 1917 \(Rex A. Wade\)](#)
- [https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/social\\_conflict\\_and\\_control\\_protest\\_and\\_repression\\_russian\\_empire](https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/social_conflict_and_control_protest_and_repression_russian_empire)
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