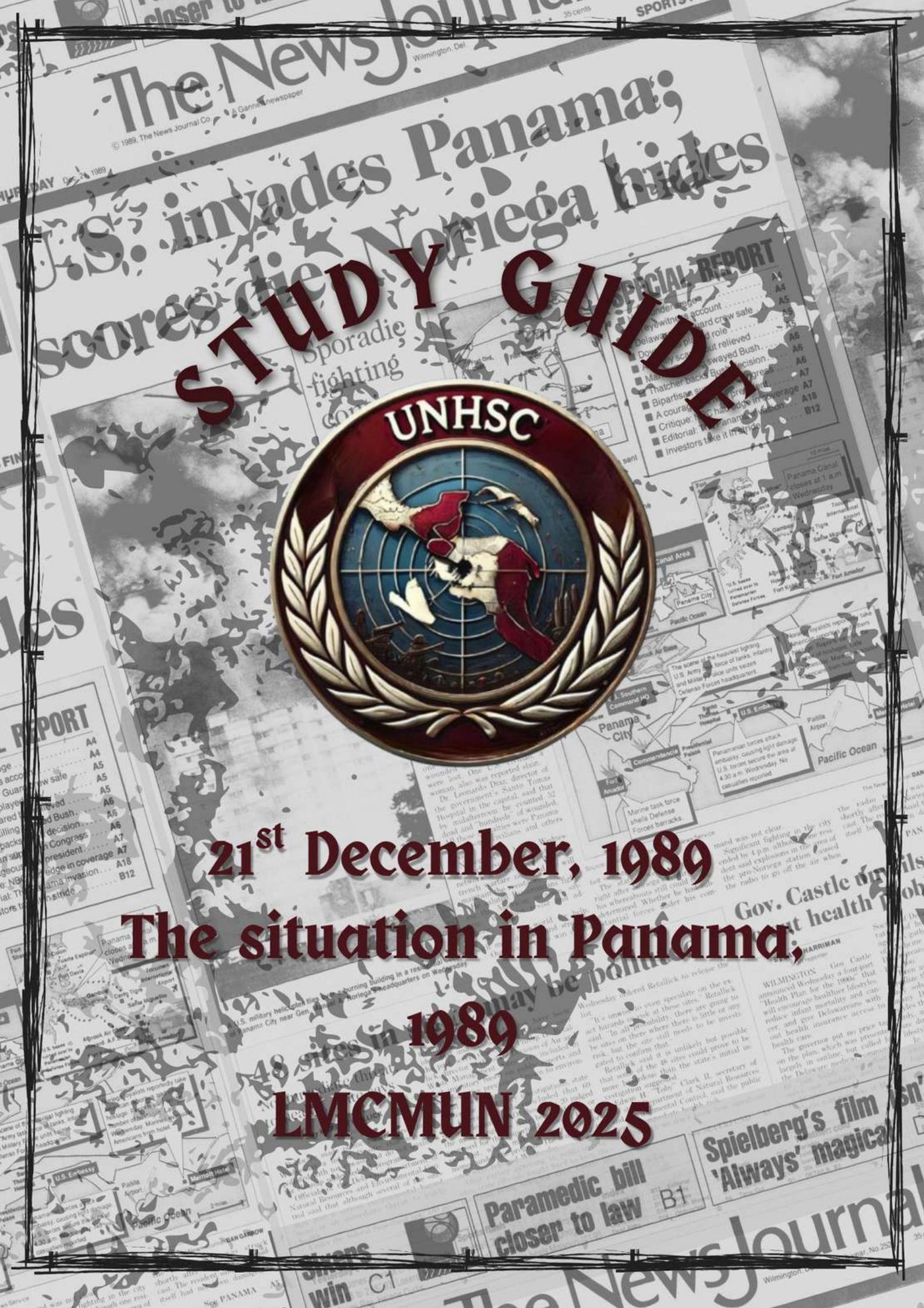




STUDY GUIDE



21st December, 1989
The situation in Panama,
1989
LMCMUN 2025

Spielberg's film 'Always' magical

Paramedic bill closer to law

Gov. Castle's health plan

Wilmington - Gov. Castle announced Wednesday a four-part "Health Plan for the 1990s" that will encourage healthier lifestyles, reduce infant mortality and cancer, and give Delawareans with health insurance access to health care.

The governor put no price tag on the plan, which was presented on the plan, which was called "bargains in health care" by the Delaware media.

Paramedic bill closer to law

Wilmington, Del. (AP) - The Delaware House of Representatives passed a bill Wednesday that would allow paramedics to perform more medical procedures, including intubation and the use of a device to open airways.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD'S ADDRESS

Dear delegates,

It is with immense pride and anticipation that I welcome you to the United Nations Historic Security Council, 1989 as a part of the fourteenth session of La Martiniere Calcutta Model United Nations.

Over the next three days, we will delve into a chapter of history that not only defined power dynamics in the late 20th century but also laid bare the limitations of international institutions when confronted with unilateral aggression: the United States' invasion of Panama in 1989. We invite you to explore an event that sparked heated international debate, shook the geopolitical status quo of the Americas, and revealed the challenging intersections of power, principle, and politics.

This was not just a military operation. It was a high-stakes intersection of political ambition, international law, human rights, and strategic interest. At the centre stood General Manuel Noriega, a man once regarded as a key U.S. ally in Latin America, and later denounced as a dictator, drug trafficker, and violator of civil liberties. Yet, the international community's response was far from unified.

The Panama Canal — a vital conduit for global commerce — adds another layer of complexity to this agenda. You will be called upon to reflect on the strategic, economic, and political significance of this narrow strip of water, and how its control has influenced foreign policy decisions for decades. How can we evaluate interventions framed as humanitarian or anti-narcotic when their outcomes are so often contested? And in such a world what role should the international community play when a superpower acts?

With veto power comes the duty to act in the interest of international peace and security, not national expedience. And yet, history has shown us that this power can be used to either uphold justice or to paralyse global consensus. This committee offers us the rare chance to interrogate those tensions. In particular, it challenges us to examine the structural power of the Permanent Five (P5) — not to criticise blindly, but to reflect carefully on how their unique status has shaped global outcomes.

Use this study guide as a general overview of the pertinent subjects and the several timelines it contains to get a sense of how things happened. This serves as the foundation for an extremely beneficial process of independent study on the agenda. Delegates should be well-versed in the agenda, which extends much beyond the Study Guide, and have a broad awareness of international events.

As your Executive board, our foremost aim is to create a space where curiosity is encouraged, diverse perspectives are respected, and diplomacy is practiced with depth and integrity. We anticipate that you will be extremely creative in your documentation and cognisant of the situational nuances. There is going to be a lot of updates, so be prepared to adjust quickly to any significant shifts in the circumstances facing the Security Council.

The Executive Board,
The United Nations (Historic) Security Council, 1989,
La Martiniere Calcutta Model United Nations, 2025,
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TOPIC AREA SUMMARY

In the early hours of December 20, 1989, the United States launched a large-scale military intervention in the Republic of Panama, codenamed Operation Just Cause. The invasion involved over 20,000 U.S. troops and hundreds of aircraft, targeting strategic military and political sites across the country. This marked the largest American combat operation since the Vietnam War and was aimed primarily at removing General Manuel Noriega, the de facto ruler of Panama and Commander of the Panama Defense Forces (PDF).

Washington justified the intervention on four key grounds: protecting the lives of approximately 35,000 U.S. citizens residing in Panama, defending democracy following the annulled May 1989 Panamanian elections, combating Noriega's involvement in international drug trafficking, and safeguarding the integrity of the Panama Canal treaties. Noriega, a former U.S. intelligence collaborator, had been indicted in the United States on drug trafficking charges earlier in 1988 and was increasingly viewed by U.S. officials as a threat to regional stability and American strategic interests.

Tensions escalated throughout 1989. Following the failed May elections—where opposition candidate Guillermo Endara was widely believed to have won—Noriega refused to concede power, intensified repression, and declared a state of war with the United States on December 15. Several incidents, including the killing of a U.S. Marine officer and harassment of U.S. military personnel, were cited by President George H. W. Bush as immediate triggers for the intervention.

As of the freeze date, December 21, 1989, U.S. forces had seized control of most key military targets and government buildings in Panama City and surrounding areas. Noriega remained at large, and sporadic resistance from remnants of the PDF continued. Reports indicated heavy fighting in civilian areas, particularly in El Chorrillo, raising concerns over potential humanitarian fallout and civilian casualties. The invasion has drawn mixed reactions globally. Several Latin American countries and members of the international community have expressed alarm at the violation of Panamanian sovereignty. The Security Council is now convening in emergency session to assess the legality, necessity, and proportionality of U.S. actions, and to determine the appropriate response under the UN Charter.

RELEVANCE OF FREEZE DATE

The U.S. Military Operation Just Cause began on the 20th of December 1989 which involved over 27,000 U.S. troops, supported by 300 aircraft and aimed to capture Manuel Noriega, secure the Panama Canal, restore democracy in Panama and protect US civilians.

By the 21st of December, the Panamanian Defense Forces or PDA, which were defending Panama against the invasion, were dismantled. Major PDF barracks had been attacked and disabled as numerous PDF soldiers surrendered or had gone into hiding. The U.S. military had quickly captured the Panama Canal Zone by this point as well. The U.S. military operations were aiming to rescue American civilians from dangerous areas like

Balboa and Fort Amador. Many neighborhoods had been destroyed, especially El Chorrillo, near the Panamanian Defense Headquarters, where gunships and other air force was used. Key areas like Rio Hato Airfield, Torrijos-Tocumen International Airport, etc had already been occupied by U.S. forces.

After Guillermo Endara had been officially sworn as the President of Panama on 20th December 1989, he was working with the United States officials to help stabilize Panama. Noriega's command center in Panama City had been bombed and his political and military control in Panama had basically ended. He had gone into hiding as U.S. forces were levelling up their efforts to capture him. Noriega's regime had completely collapsed, and civilian casualties were only mounting.

According to the Panamanian Red Cross, over 200 civilian deaths occurred in El Chorrillo alone and between 100 to 300 PDF troops had been killed.

As representatives gathered in the emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council called on December 21 st 1989, the committee commences at an extremely pivotal point in history, giving you, delegates, the opportunity to curb the damages caused, alter the timeline, and rebuild a free and sovereign Panama while simultaneously bringing out the skills of diplomacy and negotiations.

ABOUT SECURITY COUNCIL AND PAPERWORK

Powers, Functions and Mandate

The Security Council is by far the most powerful organ of the United Nations, in both its scope and in the binding nature of its resolutions on member nations. It is capable of taking urgent diplomatic action and resolving the most serious geopolitical issues. The exact scope of its powers are set down in Chapters V, VI and XII of the Charter of the United Nations (which are essential reading for any Security Council delegate). Additionally, its mandate has evolved and gained clearer definition through the body of resolutions passed by it over the years. However, its core mandate remains 'the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security'.

The Charter envisages several means for the Council to fulfil this mandate:

- calling upon parties to settle their dispute by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means (Article 33);
- investigating any dispute, or any situation which might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute (Article 34);
- recommending appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment (Article 36);
- recommending such terms of settlement as it may consider appropriate (Article 37);
- making recommendations to parties with a view to a pacific settlement of the dispute (Article 38);
- calling upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable (Article 40);
- deciding what measures not involving the use of force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions and calling upon UN member states to apply such measures (Article 41);
- taking such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security (Article 42);
- negotiating and concluding special agreement(s) for armed forces, assistance and facilities with UN member states (Article 43);
- making plans for the application of armed force with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee (Article 46);
- encouraging the development of pacific settlement of local disputes through regional arrangements or agencies (Article 52).

Composition:

The Security Council consists of five permanent members and ten non-permanent members. The five permanent members (commonly known as the 'P5') are the People's Republic of China, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

Non-permanent members are elected for a term of two years by the General Assembly on the basis of contribution to international peace and security and ensuring an equitable geographical distribution of membership. For the year 1989, the ten temporary members: Algeria, Colombia, Brazil, Canada, Finland, Ethiopia, Nepal, Senegal, Yugoslavia and Malaysia.

Moreover, any Member of the United Nations may be invited to meetings of the Security Council as an observer if its interests are specially affected by the dispute under discussion (Article 31) and any state, Member or not, may be invited if it is a party to the dispute under discussion (Article 32)

Voting:

Article 27 of the UN charter states that each and every member of the security council has one vote. Decisions on procedural matters would be taken by an affirmative vote of nine members.

As mentioned above, the 5 permanent members of the Security Council have the 'right to veto'; If any permanent member gives a negative vote on an executive decision or a resolution, that resolution or decision won't be approved by the Security Council.

The committee at LMCMUN will have more than fifteen members. For the purpose of productive discussion, the veto power on procedural matters won't have any relevance in the Security Council and every delegation that is a part of the committee will be afforded the right to vote on both procedural and substantive matters.

The resolution drafted by the Security council on the agenda is after the freeze date. This draft resolution condemning the US invasion of Panama was vetoed by France, the UK and the US. It is now upon the delegates to adopt a new set of solutions to solve the crisis.

PANAMA CANAL

The Panama Canal is a constructed waterway in Panama. It is one of the largest and most difficult engineering projects ever undertaken. It connects the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, cutting across the Isthmus of Panama. The total length of the Panama Canal from deep water in the Atlantic to deep water in the Pacific is approximately 50 miles (80 km), while the shoreline-to-shoreline length is about 40 miles (65 km). It is a maritime trade conduit. Low water levels threaten navigation through the canal during droughts. Ships can cross going in either direction, and it takes about 10 hours to get from one side to the other. It greatly reduces the time for ships to travel between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Because of it, ships are able to avoid the lengthy, hazardous routes, like those around the southernmost tip of South America via the Drake Passage, the Strait of Magellan, or the Beagle Channel.

History

- 1534: Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, commissioned a survey of the Americas to find a route that would make it easier for ships to travel between Spain and Peru. This initiative was driven by a desire to facilitate trade and travel, and potentially gain a military advantage over the Portuguese. The survey focused on finding a passage through the Isthmus of Panama, and while it initially considered Nicaragua, ultimately concluded that building a canal through Panama was impractical.
- 1668: In his 1668 publication *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, Sir Thomas Browne wrote about the possibility of using the Isthmus of Panama for a canal. He noted that the isthmus was a relatively narrow stretch of land and could be cut through to shorten the sea route to the East Indies and China.
- 1698–1700: The Darien Scheme was an attempt by the Kingdom of Scotland in the late 17th century to establish a colony and trade route in the Isthmus of Panama, it ultimately failed due to a combination of factors, including the harsh and inhospitable conditions of the region.
- 1788–1793: In 1788, Thomas Jefferson, the American Minister to France then, proposed that the Spanish build a canal across Panama. He said that it would provide a more secure and efficient route for ships that are travelling between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans than the difficult journey around the southern tip of South America. During his expedition, Alessandro Malaspina not only explored the area but also outlined plans for the construction of a canal.

This demonstration of feasibility and the detailed plans laid the groundwork for future canal development.

- 1826: US officials initiated negotiations with Gran Colombia (present-day Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama) for a canal concession, specifically for a route through Panama. However, Simón Bolívar, along with other Gran Colombian officials, declined the American offer. This refusal came from a desire to maintain their newly gained independence and a fear of American dominance, particularly in the strategic isthmus region.
- 1846: The Bidlack Treaty, (Dec. 12, 1846), signed by New Granada (now Colombia and Panama) and the United States, which granted the U.S. a right-of-way across the Isthmus of Panama in exchange for a U.S. guarantee of neutrality for the isthmus and the sovereignty of New Granada thereafter. The treaty was named for the U.S. chargé d'affaires in New Granada, Benjamin Alden Bidlack. The threat of British intrusion on the coast of Central America had shown the need for such a pact.
- 1855: William Kennish surveyed the isthmus and issued a report on a proposed canal route.
- 1876–1878: French engineers, notably Ferdinand de Lesseps and Lucien Bonaparte-Wyse, explored routes for a canal across the Isthmus of Panama and subsequently signed the Wyse Concession with Colombia in 1878. This concession granted the French company, the Société Civile, the exclusive right to build a canal through Panama.
- 1881–1889: France worked on the canal under Ferdinand de Lesseps but failed because progress was costly and extremely slow. As a cost-saving measure, the plans for a sea-level canal were eventually dropped in favour of a high-level lock-type canal, but that change had little effect. With no foreseeable return on its investment, the French public lost faith in the project and its leader. Attempts at further financing failed, and the company collapsed in 1889. Although the company reorganized in 1894, it virtually ceased to function by 1898. Any possibility of completing the canal across Panama was gone; its sole hope lay in holding together an enterprise that could be offered for sale. In the end, less than half of the excavation made by the French was used in the U.S. canal.
- 1894: The Compagnie Nouvelle du Canal de Panama was established to maintain the existing French-built Panama Canal project and seek a buyer for its assets. This company was formed after the first French company, led by Ferdinand de Lesseps, faced financial difficulties and a political scandal, leading to its collapse.

- 1902-1904: Hope became reality with the passage of the Spooner Act of 1902 by the U.S. Congress, which authorized purchasing the assets of the French company and building a canal, provided that a satisfactory treaty could be negotiated with Colombia (of which Panama was then an integral part). When treaty negotiations with Colombia broke down, Panama, with the implicit backing of the United States, declared its independence and was recognized by the United States in November 1903. The Hay–Bunau-Varilla Treaty was then negotiated between Panama and the United States. The treaty satisfied the Spooner Act and created the Panama Canal Zone; it was proclaimed in February 1904. Then the US purchased French equipment and excavations for \$40 million and paid Panama \$10 million.
- 1904: The US formally took control of the canal property on 4 May 1904, inheriting from the French a depleted workforce and a vast jumble of buildings, infrastructure, and equipment, much of it in poor condition. A US government commission, the Isthmian Canal Commission (ICC), was established to oversee construction;
- 1914: The first complete Panama Canal passage by a self-propelled, oceangoing vessel took place on January 7, 1914. With the end of construction nearing, the Canal team began to disassemble and go on to other things. Thousands of workers were laid off, town sites were abandoned and moved with hundreds of buildings disassembled or demolished. Gorgas resigned from the Canal commission to help fight pneumonia among workers in the South African gold mines, following which he was made surgeon general of the Army. Effective April 1, 1914, the Isthmian Canal Commission ceased to exist and a new administrative entity, the Canal Zone Governor, was officially established. The canal started functioning shortly after.
- 1921: United States and Colombia ratified the Thomson–Urrutia Treaty, in which the US agreed to pay Colombia \$25 million in exchange for Colombia's recognition of Panama's independence, officially settling the dispute over the 1903 separation of Panama from Colombia.

After World War II, US control of the canal and the Canal Zone surrounding it became a cause of disagreements. Relations between Panama and the United States became increasingly tense. Many Panamanians felt that the Zone rightfully belonged to Panama; student protests were met by the fencing-in of the zone and an increased military presence there. Demands for the United States to hand over

The Compagnie Nouvelle was tasked with maintaining the canal infrastructure and finding a new investor to complete the project.

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the canal to Panama increased after the Suez Crisis in 1956, when the United States used financial and diplomatic pressure to force France and the UK to abandon their attempt to retake control of the Suez Canal. Panamanians protested in riots on Martyr's Day, 9 January 1964, when about 20 Panamanians and 3–5 US soldiers were killed.

The next day, January 10, Panama broke off diplomatic relations with the United States and on January 19, President of Panama Roberto Chiari declared that Panama would not re-establish diplomatic ties with the United States until the U.S. agreed to begin negotiations on a new treaty. The first steps in that direction were taken shortly thereafter on April 3, 1964, when both countries agreed to an immediate resumption of diplomatic relations and the United States agreed to adopt procedures for the "elimination of the causes of conflict between the two countries". A few weeks later, Robert B. Anderson, President Lyndon Johnson's special representative, flew to Panama to pave the way for future talks. Negotiations over the next years resulted in a treaty in 1967, but it failed to be ratified in Panama. In 1973, the U.S. named Ellsworth Bunker as the chief negotiator, and negotiations led to an agreement of principles signed by Henry A. Kissinger and Panamanian Foreign Minister Juan A. Tack in 1974. These principles included a new treaty with a fixed termination date, the return of the canal zone to Panama, a share of the canal's benefits for Panama, a role for Panama in administering the canal, and provisions for its defence.

Important treaties

Mallarino–Bidlack Treaty (1846)

The Mallarino–Bidlack Treaty was the agreement reached on December 12, 1846, between New Granada, which today forms part of Colombia and Panama, and the United States. It emerged as a result of negotiations led by U.S. minister Benjamin Alden Bidlack with New Granada's commissioner Manuel María Mallarino.

The treaty, whose official name is Tratado de Paz, Amistad, Navegación y Comercio (Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Commerce and Navigation), was to serve as a symbol of mutual accord. It granted to the U.S. the most sweeping transit rights over the isthmus of Panama, in addition to granting military powers to quash social conflicts and independence efforts directed at Colombia. By the terms of the Bidlack-Mallarino Treaty, the U.S. militarily intervened several times on the isthmus, often against civilians, peasant guerrillas, or Liberal Party independence efforts. After the California Gold Rush of 1848, it took the U.S. seven years to build its trans-isthmian

Panama Railway. The effect of the treaty was to give the United States legal opportunity in politically and economically influencing the Panama isthmus, which belonged to New Granada at that time but later was to emerge as an independent country in the name of Panama due to the desire of the United States. However, in 1903 the United States failed to get access to a strip on the isthmus to construct a canal and then reversed its stance on Panamanian secession from the Republic of Colombia.

Hay–Bunau-Varilla Treaty (1903)

Hay–Bunau-Varilla Treaty was the agreement between the United States and Panama granting exclusive canal rights to the United States across the Isthmus of Panama in exchange for financial reimbursement and guarantees of protection to the newly established republic. The United States had offered similar terms to Colombia, which then controlled Panama, in the Hay–Herrán Treaty (January 22, 1903), but they were rejected by the Colombian government as an infringement on its national sovereignty and because it considered the compensation inadequate.

With the tacit approval of the U.S. government and the benevolent presence of the U.S. Navy in nearby waters, Panama declared its independence of Colombia on November 3, followed by de facto U.S. recognition three days later. On the 18th, Philippe-Jean Bunau-Varilla, representing Panama, met with Secretary of State John M. Hay in Washington, D.C., to negotiate the treaty that gave the United States in perpetuity a strip 10 miles (16 km) wide across the isthmus for canal construction. The United States was allowed to govern and fortify this Canal Zone. In return Panama was guaranteed its independence and received \$10,000,000 outright plus an annuity of \$250,000 beginning nine years later. The treaty was ratified by both countries in 1904.

The Hay–Bunau-Varilla Treaty was an irritant to Panamanian sensibilities from the moment it was signed. It had been written and negotiated for the infant republic by Bunau-Varilla, a French citizen who had not been in Panama for 18 years and who later openly admitted that he was willing for Panama to pay any price to ensure acceptance of the treaty by the U.S. Senate. The most-onerous part of the treaty, in the Panamanian view, was the right granted to the United States to act in the entire 10-mile- (16-km-) wide ocean-to-ocean Canal Zone as “if it were the sovereign.” Thus, the Canal Zone became in effect a foreign colony that bisected Panama, despite Theodore Roosevelt’s declaration in 1906 that no such result was intended. The Panama Canal was completed in 1914.

Thomson-Urrutia Treaty (1921)

The Thomson-Urrutia Treaty was ratified on April 20, 1921, between the United States and Colombia. Based on the terms of the agreement, the U.S. paid Colombia 25 million dollars in return for Colombia's recognition of Panama's independence. This resolved the United States support of the separation of Panama from Colombia in 1903.

It was successfully negotiated and signed by the U.S. on April 6, 1914, and ratified by Colombia on June 9 of that year.

Torrijos-Carter Treaties (1977)

The Torrijos-Carter Treaties are two treaties signed by the United States and Panama in Washington, D.C., on September 7, 1977, which superseded the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty of 1903. The treaties guaranteed that Panama would gain control of the Panama Canal after 1999, ending the control of the canal that the U.S. had exercised since 1903. The treaties are named after the two signatories, U.S. President Jimmy Carter and the Commander of Panama's National Guard, General Omar Torrijos.

This first treaty is officially titled The Treaty Concerning the Permanent Neutrality and Operation of the Panama Canal and is commonly known as the "Neutrality Treaty".

This treaty also went into effect in 1979 but has no termination date. Under the Neutrality Treaty the United States and Panama guarantee the permanent neutrality of the canal, with non discriminatory tolls and access for all nations; U.S. and Panamanian warships, however, are entitled to expeditious passage. No nation other than Panama may operate the canal or maintain military installations within Panamanian territory. The second treaty is titled The Panama Canal Treaty and provided for the gradual transfer of the operations of the Panama Canal to Panama, the phase-out of U.S. military bases in the Canal Zone, and reversion to Panama of lands and waters used in the management of the canal. At noon on December 31, 1999, the Panama Canal Authority took over management of the canal from the joint U.S.-Panamanian Panama Canal Commission.

Panama Canal: Geo-Political Significance

The Panama Canal is of immense geo-political importance as it forms a vital trade and military route. It connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and thus reduces maritime routes significantly, cutting down on travel time and costs. The strategic location of the canal proved beneficial to the U.S. during both World Wars by rapidly deploying naval forces across oceans, thus enhancing its global influence. In the midst of the Cold War, it significantly functioned in controlling routes and projecting power in the Americas.

Beyond military use, this facilitates the international trade, therefore firmly establishing its position in commerce as a cornerstone that reinforces its strategic and economic significance.

Panama Independence and Role of USA

The U.S. played a decisive role in the declaration of independence of Panama from Colombia in 1903 due to its need to construct and dominate a transoceanic canal. As an ally of the Panamanian separatists, the U.S. ensured prompt independence and subsequently secured the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty, which gave it exclusive rights over the Canal Zone. The power disparity was well depicted in the arrangement, as the U.S. dominated Panama's sovereignty. Although the country's independence helped with Panama's national identity, U.S. supremacy over the canal created discord and debates about sovereignty and equity that continued throughout the 20th century, and went on to influence the complicated relations between the two countries.

Environmental and Engineering Challenges

The building of the Panama Canal, particularly in its construction process, came with various environmental and engineering challenges. During construction, malaria and yellow fever caused deaths in thousands of workers. Innovations in locks and artificial lakes facilitated bypassing of the obstacles on the ground to achieve marvels in modern engineering through this waterway. Over the years, deforestation, habitat disruption, and water management issues emerged as environmental concerns. Droughts and climate change threaten the canal's water supply, impacting its operations. Addressing these challenges remains critical to sustaining the canal's efficiency while balancing ecological preservation with economic demands.

Situation in 1989

By 1989, Panama's political scene was shaped by tensions surrounding the canal and Manuel Noriega's dictatorship. The Noriega regime received international condemnation for corruption and human rights abuses. Relations between the U.S. and Panama deteriorated as the U.S. placed sanctions on Panama and demanded Noriega arrest. The strategic importance of the canal complicated matters further because the U.S. had to protect its interests in the region. Operation Just Cause was launched in December 1989 with the aim of arresting Noriega and restoring democracy in Panama. This period highlighted the canal's centrality in geopolitical and domestic disputes, influencing Panama's course towards the 1999 handover.

International Relations and Neutrality

The Panama Canal's neutrality is vital for global trade and international relations. The Neutrality Treaty of 1977 guaranteed equal access to all nations, fostering international confidence in the canal's operations. However, geopolitical rivalries occasionally tested its neutrality, as major powers sought to secure their interests. The strategic location of the canal made it a focus of U.S. influence in Latin America, and other nations became concerned about the possibility of biases. Balancing national control with international obligations remains important in keeping the canal a neutral and efficient trade corridor.

RISE OF MANUEL NORIEGA

Educational Background (how he came to be affiliated with the CIA)

In 1958, Manuel Noriega—more specifically, Manuel Antonio Noriega Morena—was denied admission into medical school. However, because of his exceptional high school achievements, he was awarded a scholarship to a military academy in Peru.

Although Noriega received his degree in 1962, the Central Bureau of Investigation took notice of him while he was in Chorrillos.

Noriega was the ideal CIA choice because:

1. He had no ties to his family.
2. Up until now, he had no political associations.
3. His possibilities for a career were minimal.

In summary, for at least 30 years, the CIA was able to get a talented child that they could buy effortlessly with cash.

His Advancement Within The CIA

He joined the National Guard as a sub lieutenant upon his return from Peru to Panama, his home country. He was then stationed in Colón where he advanced through the ranks was introduced to Captain Omar Torrijos. Because of Noriega's steadfast support for the right-wing Contra rebels in Nicaragua, the CIA started to see him as an important figure in Cold War geopolitics by the 1980s. According to sources in the Pentagon, at this point, he was earning over 100,00 dollars a year. Noriega took part in the military coup that overthrew Arnulfo Arias's administration and made room for Torrijos to take over. A subsequent coup attempt to remove Torrijos was unsuccessful largely thanks to Noriega.

Torrijos rewarded his allegiance by elevating Noriega to the position of military intelligence chief. He then provided intelligence on leftist movements in the area as a paid CIA informant. Repeated allegations of his involvement in drug trafficking tarnished his support for Richard Nixon's administration, which included securing the release of two American freighter sailors from Havana.

By the late 1970s, Noriega was regarded as the most feared person in Panama due to his use of harassment and intimidation against opposition parties and their leaders while serving as the head of the country's intelligence service. Noriega fought alongside

other military and civilian authorities to take control when Torrijos died in an aircraft crash in 1981. Despite his preference to operate in the background by appointing a slew of puppet presidents, Noriega, who was now a general, became the de facto head of the state of Panama by 1983.

In 1983 he succeeded to the command of the National Guard, drew the military troops together to form the **Panamanian Defense Forces**, and rose to the rank of general.

In addition to the CIA, Noriega was useful to the **Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)**, where he worked as an agent to combat drug trafficking in the area. His decision to defend the Medellin Cartel while betraying the DEA was one of the factors that ultimately contributed to his downfall.

Noriega effectively betrayed both parties at the same time by permitting money laundering through the national banking system. Corruption hampered Noriega's six-year rule. Because Noriega was such an important source of intelligence, the CIA ignored his corrupt activities even though they were fully aware of them. In addition, General Noriega is thought to have been involved in the Iran-Contra scandal, in which the Reagan administration sold weapons to Iran in order to covertly support the Contra insurgents in Nicaragua.

But in the middle of the 1980s, Noriega's ties with the US started to deteriorate. He became a liability due to his growing ruthlessness, especially after he had Hugo Spadafora, his political adversary, decapitated in 1985. In addition, his connections to Cuba and other intelligence services started to surface.

The USA was unable to disregard the threat Noriega posed at that point.

TIMELINE

DATES	DETAILS
September 7, 1977	The TORRIJOS-CARTER treaties are signed.
October 1, 1979	The Panama Canal Zone ceases to exist, the treaties come into action.
October 3 rd , 1988	Noriega gets indicted in the U.S. on charges of drug trafficking, racketeering, and money laundering.
November 3, 1988	U.S. imposes economic sanctions on Panama and freezes Panamanian assets in the U.S.
December 15, 1988	Noriega's regime faces increased pressure from the U.S. to restore democracy in Panama.
January 16, 1989	U.S. military assets are moved closer to Panama, showing their readiness to interfere.
February 1989	Guillermo Endara is publicly recognized as the legitimate opposition candidate for the upcoming elections.
April 1989	Noriega called for elections in May, but signs of fraudulent elections begin to appear.
May 7, 1989	Panama general elections are held, Guillermo Endara wins by a huge margin.
May 8-9, 1989	Noriega annuls the election results, citing fraud and starting a wave of opposition protests.

May 10,1989	Violence breaks out, U.S. diplomats in Panama try to mediate the situation.
June 1989	Guillermo Endara seeks refuge in the U.S. after the electoral fraud and violence escalates.
July 1989	U.S. Secretary of State James Baker calls for Noriega to step down.
August 1989	Diplomatic efforts to resolve the situation fail, and U.S. military preparations continue.
September 1989	The U.S. military continues moving forces closer to Panama as tensions escalate.
October 3,1989	Failed coup attempt against Noriega, by a group of conspirators, who are executed.
October 6,1989	President George H.W. Bush issues stronger warnings about Noriega's actions.
November 1989	U.S. preparations for 'Operation Just Cause' intensifies.
December 15,1989	A U.S. serviceman is killed in Panama, further escalating tensions.
December 16,1989	President George H.W. Bush orders the planning of Operation Just Cause.
December 20,1989	Operation Just Cause officially begins with U.S. forces invading Panama to depose Noriega.
December 21,1989	U.S. Forces Capture Key Military Sites.

GEOPOLITICAL CLIMATE IN 1989

On an international scale

The late 1980s witnessed a worldwide phenomenon marked by the fall of communism and rise of liberal democracies in many parts of the world. On one hand, it marked the fall of the Soviet Union and the rise of the USA as the sole superpower in a unipolar world. On the other hand, many countries including Poland and Spain saw the end of dictatorship and the coming to power of democratically elected government

Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the USSR in 1985. In 1986 he introduced his famous reforms glasnost (openness) and perestroika (economic restructuring). He also urged other countries of the communist block to introduce these reforms. These reforms somehow emboldened many countries and people in Baltic states and Caucasus started demanding more autonomy from The Soviet Union.

Demonstrations were seen in Kazakhstan, Estonia etc. On 7th July 1989, Gorbachev renounced any use of force against the nations in the Soviet Block. Subsequently, Poland was the first nation to break free from the Warsaw-pact. In other parts of the world, the Philippines witnessed the overthrow of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos and inaugurated Corazon "Cory" Aquino as the president.

The Fall Of Berlin War

The Berlin Wall was the barrier that surrounded West Berlin and prevented access to it from East Berlin and other areas of East Germany during the period from 1961 to 1989. The original wall, built of barbed wire and cinder blocks, was later replaced by a series of concrete walls (up to 15 feet high) that were topped with barbed wire and guarded with watchtowers, gun emplacements, and mines. By the 1980s that system of walls, electrified fences, and fortifications extended 28 miles (45 km) through Berlin, dividing the two parts of the city, and extended a further 75 miles (120 km) around West Berlin, separating it from the rest of East Germany.

The Berlin Wall came to symbolize the Cold War's division of East from West Germany and of eastern from western Europe. About 5,000 East Germans managed to cross the Berlin Wall (by various means) and reach West Berlin safely, while another 5,000 were captured by East German authorities in the attempt and

191 more were killed during the actual crossing of the wall.

East Germany's hardline communist leadership was forced from power in October 1989 during the wave of democratization that swept through eastern Europe. On November 9 the East German government opened the country's borders with West Germany (including West Berlin), and openings were made in the Berlin Wall through which East Germans could travel freely to the West. The wall henceforth ceased to function as a political barrier between East and West Germany.

It was one of the series of events that started the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe. The fall of the inner German border took place shortly afterward.

Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan

The Soviet invaded Afghanistan in late December 1979 by troops from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union intervened in support of the Afghan communist government in its conflict with anti-communist Muslim guerrillas during the Afghan War (1978–92) and remained in Afghanistan until mid-February 1989. These uprisings, along with internal fighting and coups within the government between the People's and Banner factions, prompted the Soviets to invade the country on the night of December 24, 1979, sending in some 30,000 troops and toppling the short-lived presidency of People's leader Hafizullah Amin. The aim of the Soviet operation was to prop up their new but faltering client state, now headed by Banner leader Babrak Karmal, but Karmal was unable to attain significant popular support. Backed by the US, the mujahideen rebellion grew, spreading to all parts of the country. The Soviets initially left the suppression of the rebellion to the Afghan army, but the latter was beset by mass desertions and remained largely ineffective throughout the war. By 1988, the Soviets decided to remove itself from the situation. Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev saw the Afghan intervention as an increasing drain on the Soviet economy, and the Russian people were tired of a war that many Westerners referred to as "Russia's Vietnam."

Tiananmen Square protests

The catalyst for the chain of events in the spring of 1989 was the death of Hu in mid-April; Hu was transformed into a martyr for the cause of political liberalization. On the day of his funeral (April 22), tens of thousands of students gathered in Tiananmen Square demanding democratic and other reforms. For the next several weeks, students in crowds of varying sizes—eventually joined by a wide variety of individuals seeking political, social, and economic reforms, gathered in the square. The initial government response was to issue stern warnings but take no action

against the mounting crowds in the square. During the last two weeks of May, martial law was declared in Beijing, and army troops were stationed around the city. However, an attempt by the troops to reach Tiananmen Square was thwarted when Beijing citizens flooded the streets and blocked their way. Protesters remained in large numbers in Tiananmen Square, centering themselves around a plaster statue called 'Goddess of Democracy', near the northern end of the square. Western journalists also maintained a presence there, often providing live coverage of the events. On the night of June 3–4, tanks and heavily armed troops advanced toward Tiananmen Square, opening fire on or crushing those who again tried to block their way. By morning the area had been cleared of protesters, though sporadic shootings occurred throughout the day. In the aftermath of the crackdown, the US instituted economic and diplomatic sanctions for a time, and many other foreign governments criticized China's handling of the protesters. The Western media quickly labeled the events of June 3–4 a "massacre." The Chinese government arrested thousands of suspected dissidents; many of them received prison sentences of varying lengths of time, and a number were executed.

Colombia: The War Against Narcoterrorism

Throughout the late 20th century, Colombia became ground zero in the global fight against narcoterrorism—a deadly combination of drug trafficking and terrorism. At the center of this conflict were drug cartels, most notably the Medellín Cartel led by Pablo Escobar, and later the Cali Cartel.

These cartels didn't just smuggle cocaine to North America and Europe—they infiltrated politics, assassinated judges, bombed cities, and ran parallel states funded by billions in drug profits. They used terror as a tool to protect their interests and silence opposition.

The Colombian government, supported by the United States under Plan Colombia, launched military and intelligence operations to dismantle the cartels. In parallel, the government also faced left-wing guerrilla groups like the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) and ELN, which funded their insurgency through drug trafficking and kidnappings. These groups blurred the lines between ideological warfare and organized crime.

The killing of Pablo Escobar in 1993, the weakening of major cartels, and the eventual peace deal with FARC in 2016 marked major milestones. Yet, narcoterrorism continues in different forms, with fragmented criminal groups still involved in drug trade and violence.

During of the Cold War and shifting U.S. strategic priorities

The 1989 invasion of Panama was the first time the United States had used force unrelated to the Cold War since 1945. Furthermore, it was the first significant overseas deployment of American troops since Vietnam. Even during the Cold War, Serbian leaders like Slobodan Milosevic and dictators like Noriega and Saddam Hussain continued to undermine the global order. How should the lone remaining superpower, the United States, deal with these autocratic leaders? Over the past forty years, the United States has intervened in Latin American countries, but always in connection with the Cold War and purported communist threats. Noriega was not a communist and had no desire to subjugate Panama to the Soviet Union. On the contrary, he played a key role in American efforts to contain the spread of communism in Central America.

The United States has long considered Panama to be strategically important due to the Panama Canal. However, the canal's strategic importance had deteriorated by the mid-1980s. In 1978, President Jimmy Carter recognized this change and agreed to hand the canal over to Panama by the end of the century.

Why, then, would the United States, even without the reasons related to the Cold War see a relatively small ruler as a significant obstacle whose overthrow required full-scale military intervention? The answer to this question depends on a number of factors, including the escalation of the conflict, internal goals like the war on drugs, and America's new global responsibilities as the leading superpower.

When Noriega was accused of drug trafficking and money laundering in Florida in February 1988 and the US declared drugs to be a major threat to American society, it was a significant turning point. Following the indictments, the US made an attempt to remove Noriega from office. The Reagan and Bush administrations wanted and favoured a Panamanian solution, such as a coup d'etat, an election that would topple Noriega, or a popular uprising like the ones that overthrew dictators like Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines and Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua.

Both governments participated in covert operations to support popular uprisings and coups, and they backed the opposition parties in the 1989 Panamanian elections. Through diplomatic and economic sanctions, military threats, and negotiations, the United States tried but was unable to remove Noriega.

Operational constraints, congressional-White House disputes, conflicting messages, bureaucratic infighting, underestimating Noriega's capacity for survival, and the poor American implementation of plans and policies were the main reasons these attempts also failed.

The failure of these measures strengthened Noriega's position in Panama because of his defiant resistance to pressure from superpowers. Consequently, as his political prominence increased, the United States' interest in overthrowing him increased.

The early USA messages

General Omar Torrijos had Noriega as an intelligence officer before he was named commander of the Panamanian Defence Forces (PDF). 5. He had engaged in the illegal smuggling of drugs and weapons as a dishonest official. However, he was considered a close ally by several U.S. government agencies. He worked with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), had supporters in the Department of Defence (DOD), and was on and off the CIA payroll as early as 1971. 7. He also acted as a communication and information link between the US and Fidel Castro. Most importantly, however, he provided access and support to the contra movement fighting the Sandinistas during the civil war in Nicaragua.

Despite his drug-related activities, Noriega was seen by the US as both an asset and a liability, at least until his 1988 indictment. Washington ignored his wrongdoings and abuses of authority. For example, in 1979, senior Carter administration officials blocked federal prosecutors from indicting Noriega for arms smuggling and drug trafficking because they wanted to continue receiving the intelligence information that he was providing. After the canal treaties were signed, they didn't want to upset the political balance in Panama. 8. The US's continued disregard for Noriega's abuses may have encouraged him to continue or even escalate his drug-related activities.

Money Laundering in Panama:

The Herrera Confessions

A signed international secret plan stated that after the death of Torrijos, Noriega was supposed to retire in 1987, when his deputy, Colonel Roberto Diaz Herrera, was supposed to replace him as PDF commander. However, on 5 June 1987, Noriega announced that he would remain PDF commander for another five years and assigned Diaz Herrera to an unimportant diplomatic position, leaving him dissatisfied and frustrated. The following day Diaz Herrera retaliated against Noriega by publicly revealing information about Noriega's crimes. According to him, Noriega had orchestrated the murder of Spadafora and that he had also rigged the 1984 elections. He even blamed Noriega for the death of Torrijos in a 1981 mysterious plane crash, claiming that Noriega had placed a bomb in his plane.

Herrera's accusations inspired massive protests against the government. On 8 June 1987, nearly 100,000 people, close to a fourth of the population of Panama City,

protested against Noriega. The opposition formed a new coalition and demanded the immediate resignation of Noriega and other individuals named by Diaz Herrera. Demonstrations and strikes continued for several weeks in both cities and rural areas. Noriega responded by charging Diaz Herrera with treason and by cracking down hard on the demonstrators, destroying and damaging property belonging to political opponents and shutting down the media

On 26 June 1987, the U.S. Senate approved a nonbinding resolution by an overwhelming vote of 84 to 2 (S. Res. 239) calling upon Noriega and his principal officers to step down pending a "public accounting" of Herrera's charges. Noriega struck back by sending government workers to demonstrate near the American Embassy.

Between August and December 1987, the United States also used three negotiating channels to present Noriega with several plans and deals for his resignation. The first channel involved Jose Bandon, the Panamanian consul general in New York, who was a close associate of Noriega. The second channel was initiated by Noriega, who invited retired Admiral Daniel J. Murphy to meet with him in Panama in August and November 1987. Finally, on 30 December 1987, Richard Armitage, assistant secretary of defence for International Security Affairs, met with Noriega in Panama.

The first channel produced the Bandon Plan, which called for the retirement of Noriega and his inner circle of PDF officers by April 1988 at the latest, the establishment of a transition regime under President Delvalle that would rule the state until the May 1989 elections, an independent media, and the resumption of U.S. aid. The circumstances behind the Murphy mission are still in dispute. Prior to his retirement in 1985, Murphy held important governmental positions including chief of staff to Vice President George Bush. It is not yet clear whether this was a private mission or another unofficial channel for communications and negotiations. In any case, Noriega acted as if Murphy represented the official American position. Murphy repeated the Bandon terms but revised one critical component-the timetable.

Murphy told Noriega he had until the May 1989 elections to resign. Noriega stated that the American timetable was not as tough as Bandon had originally presented. On 21 December 1987, Noriega rejected the Bandon Plan and a few weeks later fired Bandon. Bandon then accused Murphy of undermining his plan by giving Noriega extra time to depart.

POLITICAL INSTABILITY

The Original Alliance, U.S. Support Of Noriega (1980-1986)

Manuel Noriega involvement with American intelligence (CIA and DEA) agencies began in the late 1950s when he was enlisted as a CIA asset while serving as a lieutenant in Panama National Guard. This enlistment occurred during rising Cold War tensions in Latin America, during which the United States of America grew increasingly wary of the Soviet Union's influence following Fidel Castro assumption of power in Cuba. Noriega usefulness to U.S.A. intelligence branched from his education at the Military School of Chorrillos in Peru, an institution known for producing many of Latin America military leaders, where he established connections with both U.S.A.'s and other regional military personnel.

Throughout the 1960s, Noriega involvement escalated as he emerged as a key instrument in the CIA anti-communist initiatives all across Latin America. His intelligence activities focused on monitoring and putting an end to guerrilla movements supported by Cuba and left political parties that Washington considered as 'destabilizing'. Noriega provided the intelligence agencies with important intelligence regarding youth activists, labor party leaders, and suspected communists, many of whom later 'disappeared' or were imprisoned without trial before court . This series of action saw Noriega apply his notorious and brutal efficiency in handling opposition figures, earning him the nickname 'Pineapple Face'—an indication to his pockmarked complexion, while concurrently solidifying his standing within U.S.A. intelligence circles as an asset.

When General Omar Torrijos took control in Panama following the 1968 coup, Noriega career trajectory shifted significantly. He was promoted to Chief of Military Intelligence (G-2), he assumed control of Panama's internal security apparatus, this position that enabled him to strengthen his collaboration with U.S.A. agencies. Both the CIA and Defense Intelligence Agency (DEA) supplied Noriega with advanced monitoring equipment and instruction in interrogation methods, which he utilized against political rivals as well as in support of U.S.A.'s counterintelligence efforts. This era also witnessed Noriega's participation in the U.S.A-backed Operation Condor, the famous international campaign of political repression that spread across South America.

The Iran-Contra scandal And Noriega Exposure (1986-1988)

This scandal occurred in relation to two countries, Iran and Nicaragua which is a country in Central America lying very close to Panama in the 1980s. Under the Reagan administration, the U.S. wanted to support the anti-Communist Contras in Nicaragua which were fighting a left-wing Sandinista government and free the U.S. hostages being held captive by Hezbollah which is a militant in Lebanon, backed by Iran Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Not only was Iran under an arms embargo at this point but the Boland Amendments (1982–1984) had also banned the U.S. from sending aid to rebels like the Contras. Thus the U.S. illegally decided to sell missiles and weapons to Iran in return for the freedom of American hostages. The profits from these sales which was over 30 million dollars was used to fund the Contras in Nicaragua. This operation was done by members of the National Security Council under NSA John Poindexter and CIA Director William Casey. Investigations later conducted showed that the Panamanian fortress had been serving as a dual purpose- at the same time supporting U.S. covert operations and running huge drug trafficking operations for the Medellín Cartel led by Pablo Escobar. Most damaging were leaks of intelligence showing Noriega simultaneous business with Cuba Dirección General de Inteligencia and Sandinista leadership, revealing his betrayal of U.S. interests despite being on the CIA payroll since the early 1970s.

The DEA, having already cooperated with Noriega on selective drug interdiction, now amassed incriminating evidence of his direct complicity in shipping more than four tons of cocaine into U.S. cities. By February 4, 1988, Tampa and Miami federal grand juries had indicted Noriega on several counts of money laundering and drug trafficking, as prosecutors outlined the systemic use of Panama banking system especially institutions like Banco de Crédito y Comercio Internacional (BCCI) to wash cartel profits. The Reagan administration as a result imposed economically crippling sanctions, in March 1988 freezing Panama's assets and suspending payments through the canal; these steps crippled Panama economy while only partially keeping Noriega in his seat of power.

Election Crisis and Military Buildup (1989)

Arnulfo Arias passed away in August 1988 which removed a major obstacle to opposition unity but it also created many new problems. For instance, it left the

opposition without a strong unifying leader. The Authentic Panamenista Party, the leading opposition party in Panama, divided in December 1988. The faction led by Hildebrando Nicosia Perez was formally recognized by the Electoral Tribunal as a legitimate party representative, authorizing Nicosia along with his colleagues to use the party symbols. As stated by the opposition, the party's split was purposefully created by the government to create confusion among the voters. Nevertheless, Nicosia's attempt to present himself as the heir of Arias was unsuccessful considering the opposition's election results, which showed him receiving less than one percent of the vote.

The PPA's major body, including a significant portion of the party's hierarchy, joined the anti-government Democratic Alliance of Civic Opposition (ADOC). Guillermo Endara, the secretary general of the party, was ADOC's presidential candidate but was denied use of the party's symbols. Endara and the party's members for legislative positions contested under the name of the Authentic Liberal Party, which emerged from a division that occurred within the Liberal Party before the 1984 elections. Manuel Noriega's military governance also caused a split within the Republican Party (RP); however, a significant portion of the valid leadership of the RP joined in the ADOC coalition. Further, two other significant parties—the PDC and MOLIRENA—were included in ADOC.

Surveys indicated overwhelming opposition victory, which shocked Noriega, who had plans to manipulate the results in case of small margins. Suspecting a fraud, ADOC organized a count of results from election premises before sending them to district counting centres. On 9th May, the government released a manipulated result showing victory to Duque; however, the opposition's count was already out, giving Endara a landslide victory. Parliamentary results also indicated victory for the opposition. Opposition, foreign observers, and the clergy claimed massive irregularity in counting. Noriega had a setback as Duque backed out sensing defeat. The Electoral Tribunal, however, annulled the election. Endara and other opposition leaders were attacked and badly beaten. This nullification and attack on the opposition leaders had widespread condemnation. On 31st August 1989, the Council of State dissolved the National Assembly and announced another election in 6 months. On December 15th, the National Assembly declared Noriega as head of state and a state of emergency was declared—this triggered the US invasion. On 20th December, US troops invaded Panama and deposed Noriega. Endara was certified the winner of the elections and was inaugurated on a US military base on the same day.

The presidential election of May 1989 was the turning point in U.S.-Panama relations. When opposition candidate Guillermo Endara won by a large margin, Noriega's regime retaliated with blatant electoral fraud, voiding the result and unleashing the notorious "Dignity Battalions" on peaceful demonstrators. International observers reported general violence as these paramilitaries attacked demonstrators in footage transmitted around the world. The crisis reached a fever pitch in December when Noriega issued a "state of war" against the United States, a polemical goading that was followed by mounting harassment of American servicemen in the Canal Zone. The on-the-spot killing of U.S. Marine Lieutenant Robert Paz at a military checkpoint on December 16 furnished the immediate cause for Operation Just Cause. When American troops invaded on December 20, their sheer firepower overwhelmed Panamanian defenses at once, although the collateral damage was severe. The working-class in El Chorrillo was hit especially hard, with blocks of buildings left in ruins and hundreds of civilians killed in crossfire. The expansion of U.S. military actions in Panama during the late 1980s can be viewed with the intention of responding aggressively to increasing conflict with General Manuel Noriega's regime.

There was already an existing premise for a military basis around Noriega's drug trafficking before war policies went into effect during the Gulf War. After Noriega annulled the results of the general Panamanian elections in May 1989, which opposition candidate Endara claimed to have won, the U.S. began escalating her military presence in the Canal zone. This served the purpose of cutting off supplies and heightening external pressures put on Noriega, who was already under indictment in the US for drug dealing and racketeering. This buildup was further augmented following the murder of a U.S. Marine officer at a PDF roadblock, which sorely strained relations. By the end of 1989, the US had approximately 27,000 troops after having 16,000 already stationed alongside their 27,000 stationed in the region. British forces were already present in the region and planned to intervene on U.S. demands despite claims they were taking after the Japanese.

This operation, Just Cause, had the main goals of forcibly removing Noriega, restoring democracy, and maintaining unfettered access over the vital asset that is the Panama Canal. U.S. forces launched the operation on December 20, 1989, where they easily overthrew the PDF resistance, claiming victory over Panama's most crucial objectives. The military escalation represents a dramatic shift in the strategy guiding U.S. foreign decisions.

INTERNATIONAL LAW ASPECT OF THE INVASION

Violation Of Sovereignty-

“All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.”- Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. This basically means that no country is authorised to use military force against another country unless it is for self-defence or authorised by the United Nations Security Council. Through the invasion of Panama, the USA violated this article as military action of about 27,000 troops was done without any mandate or approval from the UN Security Council. Though the USA claimed to have done this to protect American lives, under Article 51 of the UN Charter self-defence is when an armed attack occurs and the response is necessary and proportionate to that attack.

Threat To International Peace And Regional Stability-

The Operation Just Cause involved approximately 27,000 U.S. troops and over 300 aircraft which at that time was the largest military action since the Vietnam War. The operation destroyed many neighbourhoods like El Chorrillo and lead to thousands of civilian casualties. This use of disproportionate force in a highly populated area like Panama, posed a huge threat to international peace and regional stability and went against article 24 of the UN Charter which states that the primary responsibility of the Security Council is the maintenance of international peace and security.

Violation Of Human Rights-

Operation Just Cause caused serious human rights violations and a failure to uphold the principles of civilian protection as many civilian neighbourhoods, particularly El Chorrillo were bombed and ruined causing mass casualties as well as displacement. Furthermore, Human rights organizations like Human Rights Watch as well as Amnesty International reported many violations like unlawful civilian deaths, unnecessary use of force, suppression of the press, mass arrests with those detained subjected to mistreatment. This directly contradicted Article 1(3) dictating the purposes of the United Nations states which states- “promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.”

Violation Of The Principle Of Self-Determination-

According to the principle of self-determination, a term mentioned in article 1(2) of the UN Charter, peoples and nations have the right to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development, without external interference. This allows a state to determine their own government without interference from foreign powers, but the US invasion was a military international meant to remove Panama's leader, General Manuel Noriega to establish a new government as stated by U.S. officials which violated the principle of self determination.

Violation Of The Charter Of The Organization Of American States-

Article 19 of the OAS Charter established under the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, states that "No state or group of states has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatsoever, in the internal or external affairs of any other state." which was again violated by the USA as they not only conducted a military operation in Panama but also did so with the aims of removing the current government of General Manuel Noriega from power and installing a new government.

Violation Of Geneva Convention IV

Geneva Convention IV Article 27 talks about the protection and respect that should be given to civilian persons especially during military occupation and foreign intervention. The US invasion of Panama completely violated this article by bombing and destruction of many neighbourhoods which caused the death and displacement of many civilians, forcing them to flee.

- Article 33 of Geneva Convention IV prohibits collective punishment and the civilians from being punished for an offense they have not personally. The mass civilian arrests, use of force and immense destruction caused by the invasion violated this article.

Violation Of Geneva Convention III

Article 13 of Geneva Convention III prohibits inhumane treatment of prisoners of war and ensures their protection especially against acts of violence or intimidation. The invasion violated this article as there were various reports by Amnesty International and Legal Scholars of abuse of the Panamanian soldiers who were captured like beatings, denial of medical treatment, harsh detainment conditions and rough interrogation etc.

Article 17 of Geneva Convention III prevents the use of any torture during the questioning of a prisoner of war. However, the US troops subjected the detained members of the Panama Defense Forces(PDF) to rough investigations, psychological pressure, torture and coerced them to provide intelligence about other PDF members and locations of weapons as reported by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

United States of America



Being the country carrying out the invasion, the USA had a very important role to play in the situation in Panama. While the US had originally supported Noriega especially during the peak of the Cold War, it shifted its stance due to Noriega's drug trafficking, money laundering and election fraud. The US even imposed economic sanctions on Panama and openly supported the opposition political groups and openly asked Noriega to step down. As the situation became more and more tense, US military presence in Panama increased. Finally on December 16th 1989, a US marine first lieutenant Robert Paz was shot and killed in Panama. Operation Just Cause, the US military invasion of Panama began on 20th December which involved more than 27000 US troops entering Panama on top of the 13000 troops already present there. This was done to arrest Noriega, establish Guillermo Endara as the leader of Panama who was the actual winner of the elections in May and protect the Panama Canal. The same day US President George H. W. Bush released a public address stating that it was the USA's goal to safeguard American lives, defend democracy in Panama, combat drug trafficking, and bring Noriega to justice.

Panama



Panama had been under the rule of Manuel Noriega since 1983 after the death of Omar Torrijos. Though Noriega had very good relations with the US initially, this soon changed after rising allegations of drug trafficking and election fraud. After he annulled the elections in May 1989, where his opposition Guillermo Endara was the winner, he was met with not only international condemnation but also riots and strikes all through Panama. The Panamanian Defence Forces or PDF brutally responded to these protests through means like beating and arresting the demonstrators with Endara's running mate Guillermo "Billy" Ford being beaten on live TV as well. In October, a coup was led by Major Moisés Giroldi meant to overthrow Noriega massively failed which led to most of the conspirators being arrested and executed. On 15th December, the National Assembly in Panama passed a resolution declaring a state

of war between the USA and Panama and named Noriega “maximum leader.” Following Operation Just Cause by the US on the 20th of December, The PDF initially resisted in key areas like Panama City and Rio Hato while Noriega fled to the Vatican Embassy to save himself.

Mexico

Mexico and Panama had extremely good relations before the invasion with their respective leaders meeting each other very often. Mexico also vocally supported dialogue between Panama and the United States for eventual Panamanian control of the Panama Canal during the 1970s. In 1989, Mexico recognised Guillermo Endara as the winner of the elections in May and removed its ambassador from Panama in 1989. Mexico always wanted a peaceful solution to the issue and its Foreign Secretary Fernando Solana even stated that conflicts in Latin America must be resolved by Latin Americans through peaceful means. It was strongly against and condemned the invasion of the US in Panama.



Cuba

Cuba had been against the USA's foreign policy in Latin America even before the invasion occurred. The leader of Cuba, Fidel Castro often called out American hypocrisy by stating that the U.S. only started to view Noriega as a threat when his cooperation with the USA declined and the sudden shift that had occurred regarding US foreign policy in Panama was due to political factors and not concern for Panama's democracy. He stated that the US was blind to the drug activities undertaken by Noriega when it suited its own political agenda. The Cuban newspaper Granma also regularly published articles condemning the US intervention. Being a part of the socialist bloc, Cuba also strongly condemned the U.S. military action and generally went against US actions. The USSR, Cuba and Nicaragua also called for an immediate session of The United Nations Security Council to deal with the situation on the start of the invasion, 20th December.



Colombia

As Colombia shares its border with Panama, it had long standing economic, political, and social ties with it. Colombia also relies on the Panama Canal for its international trade. Colombian foreign minister Jaime Giraldo had also expressed Colombia's concern over US intervention in Panama and supported peaceful dialogue through bodies like the Organization of American States (OAS) and not military action. In August 1989, Colombian President Virgilio Barco suggested that Latin American countries should have a larger role in the situation in Panama through methods like better cooperation with the OAS. In the OAS summit in 1989, Colombia did heavily support the resolutions that respected Panama's sovereignty. Its stance can be summarised through its president's remarks in October which stated that while Colombia supported democracy in Panama, any response to the crisis taking place should be done peacefully.



Venezuela

Venezuela was against any intervention and military action undertaken by the US. In September and October 1989, Venezuelan president Carlos Andrés Pérez urged the United States to respect Panama's sovereignty and warned the US that any military intervention would be a "grave error". Venezuela strongly supported OAS resolutions denouncing Noriega's rule but recommended the use of peaceful means and not military intervention for return to democracy in Panama. In 1988, Venezuela broke away all diplomatic ties with the Noriega regime but still went against U.S military action. Thus, though it did not support Noriega's regime, it did not support military action in Panama either. Before the intervention in Panama, many Venezuelan officials led by President Carlos Andrés Pérez suggested the formation of a regional contact group of Latin American countries for peaceful dialogue to de-escalate the situation in Panama.



The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

By the end of 1989 under Mikhail Gorbachev, The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was undergoing major reforms, and its foreign policy had shifted towards the de-escalation of tensions stemming from the The Cold War. The Soviet ministers issued warnings against a potential military operation by the US in early December and supported a peaceful solution for the dispute. On 12th December Soviet Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Gennady Gerasimov expressed concern over the buildup of American forces in Panama. On 19th December, the Soviet Foreign Ministry released a statement that any attempt made by the US to resolve the Panama situation through force would be met with international condemnation. On December 20th, the day the invasion began the Soviet Ministry called the military intervention a violation of international law and sovereignty of Panama. The USSR, Cuba and Nicaragua also called for an immediate session of The United Nations Security Council to deal with the situation.



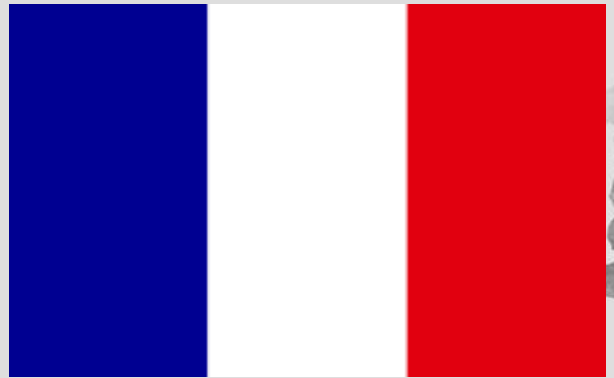
China

China opposed any foreign military interference in Latin America and maintained diplomatic neutrality, especially for the situation in Panama. However Chinese media sources like People's Daily and Xinhua News Agency constantly called out US hypocrisy of supporting Noriega for years but turning against him when he became a liability. On the 20th of December, China condemned the US invasion and supported the calling for an emergency session of the UNSC.



France

While France never fully supported Noriega, it never supported the US plans for military intervention either. France always wanted the situation in Panama to be solved by democratic means. The day the invasion began, France urged restrained action from the countries that were involved as well as immediate UN consultation.



NOTES ON PAPERWORK

Position paper

Position papers are vital for delegates to make the foreign policy of their country clear to the Executive Board. A position paper must be succinct and address the issue at hand, the response of your country to the issue at hand as well as your own unique solutions that you wish to contribute to committee. All Position Papers should preferably be in font Times New Roman, size 12. A position paper consists primarily of three parts- Statement of the Problem, Country Policy and Solutions. Delegates can include citations too in MLA8 format.

Position Papers must be submitted to the committee email id (unhsc.lmcmun25@gmail.com) by 10th May 2024.

Communiqué

Communiques are of two types - Public and Private, and may be individually written or jointly written by 2 or more parties. Communication lines will remain sporadically open throughout the course of the conference at the discretion of the Chairperson. The communicate should be realistic and viable, they should be highly detailed. A covert communicate need not follow international rules and regulations. Communicate in response to an update will be highly favoured. Delegates are recommended to submit communicate arcs to achieve a well thought out objective by the end of committee.

Directives:

This type of documentation is particularly helpful when the committee needs to act right away. Directives typically contain a set of public instructions, or in certain situations, war plans, but they do not need to be formatted to the same extent as formal resolutions. In order for the delegates to employ directives as a tool to address the issues at hand, they are typically needed in committees following the introduction of many crises.

Draft Resolution

A Draft Resolution is an official document that outlines the course of action that the UN Security Council will follow in order to resolve a crisis. The Draft Resolution has a very rigid framework, and failure to follow it could result in the resolution being rejected. The "name" or "title" of a draft resolution is followed by the names of the writers, the signatories (delegates who want the resolution to be debated in committee but do not necessarily support it), and then the resolution's main body. Draft resolutions submitted by delegates should consist of both preambulatory and operative clauses. Please check the Conference Handbook for the list of phrases that will be accepted.

Presidential Statement

A presidential statement is an executive order issued by the head of state. It is primarily used to announce a change or diversion from the normal foreign policy of a country that the delegate wishes the entire committee to know. It is also very important to not abuse the powers of a Presidential Statement. Any such paperwork which does not affect the immediate flow of the committee or that which does not reflect a change in policy will not be ratified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Board urges delegates to approach this topic with a nuanced understanding of both international law and the complex geopolitical context of the late Cold War. Delegates must consider the principles enshrined in the UN Charter—particularly Articles 2(4) and 51—while evaluating the legality of the U.S. invasion and the broader implications for state sovereignty and non-intervention. It is crucial to assess whether the stated justifications for the intervention, such as the protection of human rights, democratic governance, and regional stability, hold weight under international legal frameworks. Delegates should also analyse the responsibilities of the Security Council in responding to unilateral military actions, especially when they involve a permanent member.

Furthermore, we encourage delegates to explore all possible avenues for de-escalation and conflict resolution. Diplomatic mechanisms, regional cooperation, and multilateral dialogue must be considered before endorsing or condemning the use of force. Delegates representing smaller or non-aligned nations are particularly urged to voice concerns about the precedent this invasion may set for future international conduct. While maintaining historical accuracy, delegates are also expected to demonstrate creative thinking and a commitment to peaceful solutions, keeping in mind the immediate humanitarian situation on the ground in Panama and the Security Council's mandate to uphold international peace and security.

The Executive Board will be extremely strict with formatting ranging from commas to semicolons and of course the full stop in resolutions. We look forward to quality over quantity. In particular, a highly appreciated approach to communiques can be the communique arc wherein a set of communiques are sent to achieve the objectives.

FURTHER READING

Details of operation 'Just Cause' -

1. <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/trecms/pdf/AD1111813.pdf>

2. <https://www.military.com/history/how-operation-just-cause-us-invasion-of-panama-ousted-dictator.html>

3.

https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/History/Monographs/Just_Cause.pdf

4. <https://www.hrw.org/reports/pdfs/worldreports/world.89/panama.pdf>

Life of Manuel Noriega-

1. <https://www.thoughtco.com/manuel-noriega-4766576>

2. <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/history/manuel-noriega>

3. <https://www.military.com/history/how-american-living-panama-began-ouster-of-dictator-manuel-noriega.html>

More About Panama Canal-

1. <https://www.library.hbs.edu/working-knowledge/panama-canal-troubled-history-astounding-turnaround>

2. <https://pancanal.com/en/history-of-the-panama-canal/>

Legality of the operation-

1. <https://bpb-us->

w2.wpmucdn.com/wp.towson.edu/dist/b/55/files/2019/11/fall-1994-Margolis.pdf

2. https://postgraduate.ias.unu.edu/upp/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/6_Dam_article.pdf