DELHI PUBLIC SCHOOL, KARNAL
MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE (SPECPOL)

AGENDA

The Invisible War: Shadows of Proxy Armies — Dismantling State-Sponsored Terrorism, Narco-Crypto Financing, and Intelligence Operations Fuelling Middle East Chaos

BACKGROUND GUIDE

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Greetings Delegates,

It gives us immense pleasure to welcome you to this simulation of the SPECPOL at DPSK MUN 2026. We look forward to an enriching and rewarding experience.

This study guide is by no means the end of research, we would very much appreciate it if the delegates are able to find new realms in the agenda and bring it forth in the committee. Such research combined with good argumentation and a solid representation of facts is what makes much as possible, as fluency, diction or oratory skills have very little importance as opposed to the content you deliver. So just research and speak and you are bound to make a lot of sense. We are certain that we will be learning from you immensely and we also hope that you all will have an equally enriching experience. In case of any queries feel free to contact us. We will try our best to answer the questions to the best of our abilities.

We look forward to an exciting and interesting committee, which should certainly be helped by the all-pervasive nature of the issue. Hopefully we, as members of the Executive Board, do also have a chance to gain from being a part of this committee. Please do not hesitate to contact us regarding any doubts that you may have.

Regards,

Chairperson - Mr. Srijan Sharma
Vice Chairperson - Mr. Sarthak Bahal

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE — SPECPOL

1. Formation and Historical Evolution

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL) is the Fourth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

When the United Nations was created in 1945, many political issues were handled by one committee. However, as more countries in Asia and Africa gained independence from colonial rule in the 1950s and 1960s, the UN had to deal with many new issues like independence, peacekeeping, refugees, and political conflicts. One committee could no longer manage all this work.

To solve this problem, in 1993, the UN combined two existing committees:

- The Special Political Committee, and
- The Fourth Committee, which mainly looked after decolonization.

Together, they became the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL).

Today, SPECPOL discusses important political issues that affect peace and security but are usually not directly handled by the UN Security Council.

2. **What Does SPECPOL Do? (Mandate)**

SPECPOL discusses several important international issues, including:

- Decolonization and territories that have not yet achieved self-government.
- United Nations peacekeeping missions.
- Palestinian refugees and the work of UNRWA.
- Peaceful uses of outer space.
- The effects of atomic radiation.
- Mine action and humanitarian issues.
- Other important political questions assigned by the General Assembly.

For this committee, delegates will focus on state-sponsored terrorism and terrorist financing in the Middle East.

Although the UN Security Council has the main responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, the General Assembly—and therefore SPECPOL—can still discuss international political problems, recommend solutions, encourage cooperation between countries, and propose international policies.

3. What Can SPECPOL Do? (Powers)

SPECPOL can:

- Discuss major international political issues.
- Recommend solutions to the General Assembly.
- Encourage countries to cooperate.
- Suggest new international policies.
- Recommend stronger implementation of international laws and conventions.
- Promote dialogue between countries.

Its resolutions carry significant political and diplomatic weight because they represent the views of the international community.

INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA

The Middle East has experienced conflict for many decades, but not all wars are fought openly between countries.

Many conflicts are fought indirectly through proxy groups (armed organizations supported by countries), secret intelligence operations, and hidden financial networks. This is why the agenda is called "The Invisible War."

Some countries support proxy groups to protect their interests or increase their influence without directly entering a war.

Terrorist organizations often raise money through illegal methods such as drug trafficking (narco-financing), oil smuggling, extortion, front charities, hawala networks, and cryptocurrencies, making it difficult to trace and stop these funds.

Intelligence agencies also play a major role by carrying out secret operations, including gathering information, cyber operations, sabotage, and covert missions that can influence conflicts.

These hidden activities often make wars longer, increase regional instability, and create humanitarian crises affecting millions of civilians.

The international community faces the challenge of balancing national security, state sovereignty, human rights, and international law while addressing these threats.

In this committee, delegates will discuss:

- State-sponsored terrorism.
- Terrorist financing through illegal financial networks.
- The role of intelligence operations in regional conflicts.

- International cooperation to prevent terrorism and promote peace.

Delegates are expected to propose practical and legally sound solutions that reduce violence, improve accountability, strengthen international cooperation, and promote long-term stability in the Middle East.

Key Definitions

1. State-Sponsored Terrorism

When a government secretly supports a terrorist or armed group by providing money, weapons, training, or intelligence to achieve its own political or military goals. The government often denies being directly involved.

2. Proxy Warfare

A type of conflict where a country fights through another armed group instead of using its own military. This helps the country avoid direct involvement in the war.

3. Non-State Armed Actor (NSAA)

An organized armed group that is not part of any country's official military or government. These groups may fight for political, religious, or ideological reasons.

4. Terrorist Financing

The process of collecting, transferring, or using money to support terrorist activities. Funds may come from illegal activities such as drug trafficking, smuggling, or extortion.

5. Cryptocurrency Financing

The use of digital currencies like Bitcoin to transfer or store money for terrorist or illegal activities. Cryptocurrencies can make it harder to trace financial transactions.

6. Intelligence Operations

Secret activities carried out by governments to collect information, prevent threats, or protect national security. These may include surveillance, cyber operations, and covert missions.

7. Hybrid Warfare

A strategy that combines military force with cyberattacks, proxy groups, economic pressure, and misinformation. It aims to weaken an opponent using multiple methods at the same time.

8. Grey Zone Conflict

Actions taken by countries that are more aggressive than diplomacy but do not amount to full-scale war. Examples include cyberattacks, proxy support, and covert operations.

The Middle East Conflict System – A Brief History

The Middle East has experienced conflicts for many years. However, most of these conflicts were not fought directly between countries. Instead, countries often supported armed groups, carried out secret intelligence operations, or used hidden financial networks to achieve their goals.

The 2026 Iran conflict is a good example. After attacks on Iran's leadership, groups supported by Iran, such as Hezbollah, the Houthis, and Iraqi militias, also became involved. This shows how one conflict can quickly spread across the region through proxy groups.

TERROR FINANCING

1. Causes of Terror Financing

Terrorist groups need money to survive and carry out attacks.

They usually get funds from:

- Drug trafficking.
- Smuggling weapons or oil.
- Kidnapping for ransom.
- Donations from supporters.
- Illegal businesses.
- Cryptocurrency.

2. How Terrorist Financing Works

Terror financing usually happens in three simple steps:

- Raise Money through legal or illegal sources.
- Move Money using banks, cash, hawala, or cryptocurrencies.
- Spend Money on weapons, training, recruitment, and attacks.

3. Why It Is Dangerous

Terror financing allows terrorist groups to:

- Buy weapons.

- Recruit new members.
- Plan attacks.
- Spread violence across countries.

Without money, terrorist organizations become much weaker.

4. How Countries Stop Terror Financing

Governments try to stop terror financing by:

- Freezing bank accounts.
- Tracking suspicious financial transactions.
- Stopping illegal trade.
- Sharing intelligence with other countries.
- Punishing individuals or organizations that fund terrorism.

5. What is Narco-Crypto Financing?

Some terrorist groups earn money from drug trafficking and then move this money using cryptocurrencies.

This makes it harder for governments to find where the money is going because digital currencies can be transferred quickly across borders.

STATE-SPONSORED TERRORISM

1. How It Works

Sometimes a country secretly supports an armed group by giving it:

- Money.
- Weapons.
- Training.
- Intelligence.

The country benefits from the group's actions while denying direct involvement.

2. Why Is it Difficult to Prove

It is often difficult to prove that a government is behind a terrorist attack because:

- The support is given secretly.
- There may not be enough evidence.
- Governments usually deny their involvement.

3. State Responsibility

International law tries to decide when a country should be held responsible for supporting an armed group.

However, proving this responsibility is often difficult because clear evidence is not always available.

4. Why Accountability Is Difficult

Even if many countries believe a government supported terrorism, legal action can be difficult because:

- Evidence may be limited.
- Politics often influence decisions.
- Powerful countries may disagree on responsibility.

IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATIONS / DOCUMENTS

1. Financial Action Task Force (FATF)
Created in 1989 by the G7 to fight money laundering. It sets global standards for countries to track and block illegal money flows, including terror financing. Maintains "grey" and "black" lists that pressure non-compliant nations.
FATF's tracking mechanisms are the primary tool for exposing how proxy militias in the Middle East receive laundered or crypto-based funding.

2. International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (ICSFT), 1999
Adopted by the UN General Assembly after rising concern over terror funding networks. Obligates states to criminalize the funding of terrorism, even indirect support.Legal backbone for prosecuting financiers, not just fighters.
Directly applicable to state sponsors accused of funneling money to proxy groups, making it a key legal reference for SPECPOL debate on accountability.

3. Geneva Conventions (1949) and Additional Protocols
Drafted after WWII to regulate humane conduct during war. Protects civilians, prisoners, and non-combatants during armed conflict. Frequently invoked but violated in modern proxy conflicts.

Sets the humanitarian-law baseline for judging conduct of proxy forces operating without direct state accountability in Middle East conflict zones.

4. UN Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001)
Passed after 9/11 as an emergency counter-terrorism measure. Requires states to criminalize terror financing, freeze assets, and share intelligence. Created the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC).
Forms the compliance framework SPECPOL can reference when discussing state obligations to disrupt terror financing pipelines feeding proxy armies.

5. UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Convention), 2000
Adopted to combat rising cross-border organized crime post-Cold War. Targets trafficking, smuggling, and organized networks. Its protocols specifically address human and arms trafficking.
Central to addressing narco-financing routes that fund militias, linking organized crime directly to regional instability.

6. UN Security Council Resolution 2462 (2019)
A modern update addressing evolving terror financing methods. Expands Resolution 1373 to cover new-age tools like cryptocurrency and informal transfer systems (hawala).Highly relevant to digital-age financing.
Speaks directly to the "narco-crypto financing" dimension of your topic, offering delegates a concrete legal hook for crypto-related resolutions.

7. UN Charter, Article 2(4)
Part of the founding UN Charter, 1945. Prohibits the threat or use of force against another state's sovereignty and bans intervention in internal affairs. The core legal principle invoked whenever proxy warfare or covert intelligence operations are alleged.
Directly relevant to accusing states of using proxy armies as a workaround to avoid direct violation of non-intervention norms.

8. Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), 2013
Adopted by the UN General Assembly to regulate the global arms trade. Requires states to assess risk before authorizing arms exports, especially where weapons could fuel conflict or terrorism. First-ever binding treaty on conventional arms transfers.
Key legal tool for scrutinizing how weapons reach proxy militias despite embargoes, a central issue in Middle East arms flows.

9. UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988 (Vienna Convention)
Adopted to strengthen international drug-control cooperation beyond the 1961 Single Convention. Targets drug trafficking networks and mandates cooperation on seizing drug-linked assets. Directly links narcotics trafficking to organized crime enforcement.
Foundational for addressing the "narco" half of narco-crypto financing, especially drug-funded militia operations in the region.

Regional Case Studies

1. Hezbollah (Lebanon)

Hezbollah is a powerful armed and political group based in Lebanon. It was formed in 1982 and has received financial, military, and political support from Iran for many years. The group has been involved in several conflicts with Israel and plays an important role in Lebanon's politics and security.

2. Houthis (Yemen)

The Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah, are an armed group that controls much of northern Yemen. They have received military support, including weapons and training, from Iran. In recent years, they have launched missiles and drone attacks and targeted ships in the Red Sea, affecting international trade and regional security.

3. Iraqi Militias

Several armed groups in Iraq have close ties with Iran and operate alongside or outside the country's official security forces. These militias were originally formed to fight ISIS but later became influential political and military actors. Some have carried out attacks on foreign military bases, increasing tensions in the region.

4. Hamas (Gaza)

Hamas is a Palestinian armed and political organization that governs the Gaza Strip. It has been involved in repeated conflicts with Israel and has received financial and military support from Iran. The ongoing Israel–Hamas conflict has caused severe humanitarian challenges and remains one of the biggest security issues in the Middle East.

5. Syria

Syria has faced years of civil war, terrorism, and foreign involvement, making it one of the most unstable countries in the region. Even after major political changes, the country continues to struggle with rebuilding, the presence of armed groups, and security threats. Syria remains an important part of discussions on regional peace and stability.

6. The 2026 Iran Conflict

The 2026 conflict between Iran, Israel, and the United States quickly spread beyond these countries because several proxy groups also became involved. Armed groups such as Hezbollah, the Houthis, and Iraqi militias supported Iran during the conflict. This demonstrates how modern wars can expand through alliances, proxy groups, and secret operations instead of remaining direct wars between countries.

Indicative Portfolio Positions

Countries (Portfolios) often have similar views because of their alliances, political interests, or regional partnerships. For example, some countries strongly support counter-terrorism efforts, while others focus on protecting state sovereignty or supporting certain regional allies. However, delegates should not assume that every country in the same region shares identical opinions. Each delegate must carefully research their assigned country's official foreign policy, voting record, and public statements before the committee.

Concluding Remarks

The Agenda and the proceedings present several nuances and taking a note of it become very vital :

1. The Delegates must thoroughly research their portfolio, the agenda including the global problems and solutions related to the agenda, prior to the proceedings.
2. The portfolio stance which includes foreign policy of the country, domestic considerations, the prior statements/resolutions voting should be taken into account while forming arguments.
3. It is encouraged that the delegates do not merely reflect information but are analytical. It is expected that they identify problems, analyse them, find out the nuances and propose solutions (if applicable). All of this needs to be done keeping in mind the portfolio stance. A problem for one country might not be a problem but instead a useful policy for the other.
4. There is no set way to research and analyse, the delegates are encouraged to scour through multiple sources like research papers, research articles, blogs, newspapers, books, legal documents etc. to pick up and understand detailed arguments and then to present it in their own way in the committee.
5. It is also essential that the facts (such as statistics, case laws, particular instances, case studies, legal precedent, UN resolutions etc) must be checked from sources given in the Rules of Procedure, official sources list. In case of dispute in facts, those sources shall be given priority.
6. The Way forward :
    a. Understand the agenda, research it independently and find out its background, current problems, various country stances etc.
    b. Understand the portfolio well.
    c. Research and understand the portfolio’s stance and conduct in relation to the issues relating to agenda over the past time. This will help the delegate develop a mindset as to how and in what direction to think while researching, analysing and arguing.
    d. Compile all of the research and analysis, organise them well and understand to their core.

e. If the delegate is well versed with these nuances, then operating and arguing in the committee becomes easier and well structured.

Good luck.