

Galilee Model United Nations Conference 2018



Disarmament

Research Report

The Mediterranean region extends between Africa, Asia, and Europe and it played a very important role in human development. It is also considered as an area where people first started practicing agriculture. Throughout the centuries, hundreds of civilization fought, developed, traded and worked in this region.

The Mediterranean Sea was a great opportunity for people living on its borders in so many aspects and it gave them access to a lot of basic necessities, such as food, trade and a comfortable temperature. In addition, it made it easier for the people to travel between countries, settle there and spread their culture. Over time, the Romans slowly gained control over the whole Mediterranean and by 30 BC called it “Our Sea.” This was the first and last time the whole Mediterranean was controlled by one group.

In the Middle Ages, Muslim conquerors took over most of North Africa, Spain, and the Middle East. These areas controlled trade in the sea, which made them very rich. By the 19th century, European countries took advantage of the weakness of Northern African countries and colonized them. As a result, the Europeans were able to go east.

By the 1970s, most of the North African countries gained their independence back. By then, countries realized that if they want to make the Mediterranean a safer place, they should start working together. Now, tourism has flourished. Also the trade is improving in the area because of the opening of the Suez Canal, which allows ships to access the Red Sea. Unfortunately, these industries have polluted the Mediterranean, and that is why in 1975, 16 countries signed a Mediterranean Action Plan in order to fix the problem of pollution.

The states that make up the Mediterranean Region are: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Morocco, Monaco, Montenegro, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. The UK has territory at Gibraltar, which also touches the Mediterranean Sea. The Gaza Strip is also on the coast. Often, Portugal is included in this region as well even though it does not touch the Mediterranean Sea.

The Southern Mediterranean countries’ economies, such as the African countries, are not as developed as the Northern Mediterranean. So people find it difficult to find work. Many of

them have experienced war such as Libya. Others have unstable countries such as Egypt. Stable countries improve security in the region.

Some of the countries in Northern Africa have trouble controlling their borders. In Libya, the civil war causes many problems. Armed groups control some of the ports. With the help of smugglers, they put people on overcrowded boats and send them to Europe. They charge people thousands of dollars. Many of the boats are unsafe and people drown.

When there is conflict, there is no safety. Syria has been experiencing a civil war within its borders since 2011, and many Syrians have become refugees. This resulted in the European Migrant Crisis, with over 2.4 million Syrians fleeing Syria to Turkey. However, many of them are not happy in Turkey, and prefer going to Europe where there are more opportunities. Many of them try to cross the sea from Greece and then to their final destination in Europe. This has led to a huge humanitarian problem because many refugees are dying in the sea. Crossing the sea is really dangerous and that is why the EU is trying to stop people from crossing it. But at the same time, there are no alternatives.

The monk seal, a sea creature is endangered because of the polluted rivers of neighboring countries that end up in the Mediterranean. In addition, communities are endangered because of the illegal trade in drugs and weapons using the Mediterranean. The world community would like to see a safer and more cooperative Mediterranean region.

Euro-Mediterranean Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism: This was a document that was agreed to by the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in 2005. It states that the countries will do everything in their power to stop terrorism. This includes exchanging information, respecting human rights, and working to stop the causes of terrorism. They also pledge to improve security in shipping and aviation.

Mediterranean Action Plan: In 1975, this plan was adopted by 16 Mediterranean countries to protect the sea from pollution. As they researched, they discovered that economic problems and development without plans were two of the major causes of pollution. In 1995, a second phase started and now the European Union and 21 countries around the Mediterranean are members.

Questions to consider:

1. What is threatening the security of the Mediterranean region?
2. How is your country helping with maintaining the stability and the security of the Mediterranean basin?
3. How can cooperation between countries help with the securing the Mediterranean region?
4. How can security in the Mediterranean region be strengthened? Consider the environment, crime, refugees, wars, trade, etc.

Useful Links:

- <https://montessori-mun.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Strengthening-of-Security-and-Cooperation-in-the-Mediterranean-Region-BG-MS.pdf>
- <http://eu-un.europa.eu/eu-presidency-statement-%C2%96-strengthening-of-security-and-cooperation-in-the-mediterranean-region/>
- <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PE221.html>