

YOUNG VOICES MUN II

Medieval Peace Treaties

Academic Guide

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1. Introduction to the Committee

Medieval Peace Treaties (MPT) is an experimental committee unique to YVMUN. Its sole focus is to reenact significant historical negotiations. Nonetheless, it's important to note that MPT doesn't have an official status in MUN, and is more of a reenactment. We hope that delegates can jump into their historical roles and debate on such issues with the astuteness and character of those that once had to debate peace negotiations.

We hope you enjoy this committee as much as we enjoyed planning it. At the same time, we also hope you make meaningful connections with history and expand your historical

knowledge on the struggles that historical figures faced and how they manifested such through diplomacy back then.

2. Topic A: Peace of Westphalia

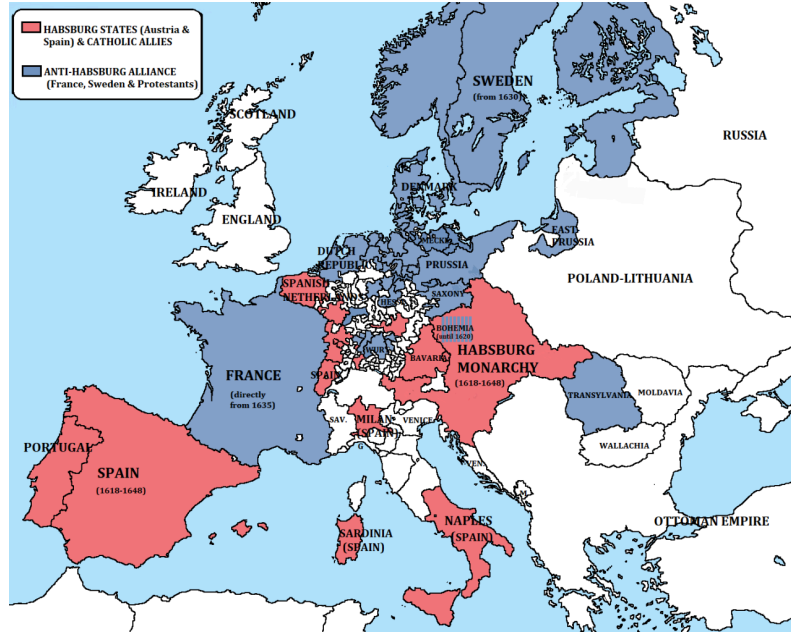
2a. Historical Context

For the past 40 years, Europe has been at war. In 1617, Bohemian Nobles accepted Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II of Habsburg as their King, however, a year later they found themselves in dismay with their decision. The devotedly catholic Ferdinand II had ambitions to re-catholicize much of Calvinist Bohemia and other protestant regions that had once achieved their religious freedom back in the peace of Augsburg in 1555. As a result of the Habsburg ruler's ambition, the nobles of Bohemia incited revolt against him. On May 28, 1618, the rebels stormed the Bohemian seat of power, the Prague royal Habsburg castle, and threw two Habsburg governors and a secretary off a window. Although these would survive the 70-foot-high fall, this act of defiance towards Ferdinand II would inevitably lead to war, as it freed Bohemia of Habsburg control.

What ensued was what's usually known as the Bohemian phase of the war, in which the newly elected Bohemian Elector, Frederick V, immediately saw attacks by the Holy Roman Empire upon his election. This phase of the war eventually ended as a Habsburg success, as the Holy Roman Empire's military effort was aided by the Spanish Empire, due to their Habsburg allegiance. Ferdinand II would re-catholicize Bohemia as Frederick V fled. This Habsburg victory didn't last long, as in 1625 began the Danish Phase, where the protestant king Christian IV of Denmark intervened on behalf of the protestants that had just suffered a significant loss. Christian had built an

Anti-Habsburg alliance with the United Provinces and England, and Ferdinand had also consolidated a “Catholic League” of powers which fought on his behalf. Despite the aid Christian received, he was eventually defeated by Habsburg forces and forced to withdraw, particularly because of the cunning Habsburg commander Albrecht von Wallenstein, which led many victories against Christian. The seemingly enormous degree of Habsburg success led Ferdinand to establish the edict of Restoration in 1629. He implemented more aggressive religious norms that forbade protestant worship in occupied protestant lands and put former protestant church property in the hands of the Catholic Church. Furthermore, he also limited the autonomy of such states.

Once again, the Habsburgs would see an end to their success as in 1630 began the Swedish phase. The Swedish king Gustavus Adolphus would also intervene on behalf of the Protestants. Gustavus was an innovative military leader, which had a well-experienced and well-trained army that before had fought the Polish Winged Hussars further East. His army swiftly conquered much of northern Germany, and eventually expanded into the southern regions. Wallenstein would once again be appointed as commander to deal with such a threat, and would effectively slow the expansion of the Swedes. In 1632, Gustavus would die in battle, which was a significant blow to the Swedish army. Eventually, in 1634, at Nordlingen, the Swedes suffered a decisive defeat. The French Monarchy, at the time led by Cardinal Richelieu, would join the war in 1635. Despite being a Catholic power, the French Monarchy intervened on behalf of the protestants due to the long time Bourbon rivalry with the Habsburgs. Religious issues were evidently losing their significance. This stage was the last one, known as the Franco-Swedish Phase.



The Habsburg army, which had been fighting for decades, lost a decisive loss against the French at Rocroi in 1643, and would suffer various losses further towards Bavaria. Finally, in 1648, after three decades of fighting, 8 million deaths, the destruction, and devastation of much of Germany, all parties were ready to come to a peace agreement.

2b. Current Situation

It is now October 1648, and various issues are at stake to be talked about. The Holy Roman Empire encompasses an area of numerous city states that, especially those in modern day Germany, experienced constant invasions by various powers throughout the conflict. Once, catholic nations were invaded by protestant powers and vice versa. Hence, the religion of such states is to be determined in the most strategic way possible, ideally to avoid further conflicts and tensions. Furthermore, seeing as various powers intervned, it's necessary to establish the territorial disputes that nations may have. It's important to

acknowledge the Protestant states in the north of Germany and those in the south of Germany, where much of the war raged on. Each delegation may have different desires regarding the outcome of what they expect to gain or achieve from this peace conference.

2c. Key points

- One of the most important things to consider is religion. What will become of the religion of the states and city-states where the war raged on? Will regions within the Habsburg dominion have more autonomy from the Holy Roman Emperor?
- Another significant thing to consider is what each specific power that was involved in this conflict will get from it. Whether it's territory, religious freedom, building alliances etc.
- Furthermore, consider the European balance of power. Is it essential to properly balance power in Europe and not allow one nation from becoming too powerful? This may be a significant push in establishing a lasting peace and fomenting diplomacy

2d. Key Powers

<u>Habsburg Supporters</u>	<u>Anti-Habsburg alliance</u>	<u>Neutral</u>
Holy Roman Empire	France	Swiss Confederacy
Spanish Empire	Sweden	Poland
Bavaria	United Provinces of the	Venice

	Netherlands	
Cologne	Brandenburg-Prussia	Papal States
Mainz	Bohemia	
Bremen	Palatinate	
Magdeburg	Savoy	