



# African Union: Somaliland



Chair: Will Hartford

Co-Chair: Max Gravallese

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## Letter From the Chair

Dear Delegates,



Welcome to BC High MUN 31! It is my honor and privilege to welcome you to the African Union Committee. My name is Will Hartford, I'm from Milton Massachusetts, and I'm a junior here at Boston College High School. I have participated in Model UN for a number of years, having started in 6th grade in Middle School. Now, here at BC High, I've participated in the club for three years and have the privilege of working on our Secretariat with the role of Rapporteur. Over the years, Model UN has helped me grow my passion for international policy, meet dozens of exceptional people, see amazing places, and develop key skills. I credit Model UN with helping me develop my leadership, teamwork, and public speaking skills.

Above all, Model UN has been one of the most fun and exciting experiences I've had through school. Each conference brings new opportunities to be bold, competitive, and to meet new people. Whether our time in the African Union will be your first, third, or even tenth conference, I'm incredibly honored that you've chosen our committee and excited to give you all as enriching an experience in Model UN as I've been able to have in years past.

Our committee is incredibly interesting and exciting as we are confronting an issue relevant and important in our world today. The decisions and resolutions we pass together are incredibly important, as they have the power to shape the future of a nation. The question of Somaliland's sovereignty and recognition as an independent nation have implications for Somalia, African, and global relations.

I encourage everyone to come to our committee with an open mind, well prepared, and with an eagerness for debate. I hope you may find the background guide provided helpful and enriching in your preparation for our conference together. Please feel free to reach out via email with any questions to myself ([wc.hartford24@students.bchigh.edu](mailto:wc.hartford24@students.bchigh.edu)) or our Co-Chair, Max Gravallesse ([ma.gravallesse@students.bchigh.edu](mailto:ma.gravallesse@students.bchigh.edu)). I'm excited to be chairing your committee on this exciting issue and can't wait to see you in March!

Sincerely,

Will Hartford '24

African Union: Somaliland Chair & BC High Model UN Secretariat Rapporteur

## I. Letter From the Co-Chair

Dear Delegates,



My name is Max Gravallesse and I'm a junior here at BC High. I play jv soccer at BC High and I am a member of the ski team. I like to cook and love Vietnamese pho. 'Big fan of edamame. Who among us isn't?

I have been involved with Model UN since my freshman year. I am very happy to be the co-chair with Will Hartford. Will is very knowledgeable about Model UN protocol and the African Union.

The African Union is an amazing, new political and legal entity. It has helped to make the African continent better. It has extended life expectancy, increased literacy, and reduced the spread of disease. The work of the committee brings to life the beauty of Africa and the potential for this continent to become a dominant region in the 21st century.

Feel free to reach out to me with any questions: [ma.gravallesse24@students.bchigh.edu](mailto:ma.gravallesse24@students.bchigh.edu)

Sincerely,

Max Gravallesse'24



## II. African Union: Committee Overview

The African Union (AU) is a continental organization consisting of 55 countries in Africa established with a vision of creating “An Integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.”

The AU was established on May 26, 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and officially launched on July 9, 2002 in South Africa. The first initiative to form the AU was taken in 1963 when 32 independent African states met together in Ethiopia to form their first post-independence continental constitution dubbed the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The main objective of the OAU was to provide freedom, equality, justice and dignity to the African people. As a successor of the OAU, the AU was finally established in 2002 with the following objectives:

- To achieve greater unity and solidarity between African nations,
- To promote peace, security, and stability on the continent,
- To protect the sovereignty of member states and to protect territorial integrity,
- To coordinate and strengthen the relation of African states to ensure better life of African people in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- To improve democratic ideology and many more.

The AU was developed with a similar idea of the European Union (EU) and has ten different departments including agriculture, political affairs, peace and security. The founding charter mandates the AU to work on “democracy, human rights and development”, and support development endeavors in the continent and send peacekeepers to resolve conflicts. In May 2003, peacekeepers from South Africa, Ethiopia and Mozambique were deployed in Burundi which heralded the first military intervention of the AU. The AU also played a vital role for



peacekeeping in Sudan's Darfur in 2004 which was later replaced by a United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission in 2007. Collaboration between the UN and the AU in the maintenance of peace and security has very much intensified in recent years while joint-effort has been observed in conflict prevention and peacekeeping.

To establish a peaceful Africa, the UN provides assistance to the AU based on an agreement Ten-Year-Capacity-Building- Programme for the African Union, which was signed in 2006 between these two organizations. In addition, to provide consistent support in the area of peace and security, the UN General Assembly (GA) established the UN office in the AU for both capacity-building and short-term operational support in 2010.

The function of the AU is executed through several major decision-making organs such as: Assembly of Heads of State and Government; Executive Council; Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC); Specialized Technical Committees (STCs); Peace and Security Council and African Union Commission. The AU works to achieve an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa. To ensure these objectives, Agenda 2063 became a strategic framework of long-term transformation in the socio-economic sector.



# Introduction to African Somaliland

Somaliland, officially the Republic of Somaliland, is a self-declared state in the Horn of Africa, which is located in the north-western part of Somalia. It declared independence from Somalia in 1991, following the outbreak of a civil war in the country, but it has not been recognized as an independent state by any country in the world. Despite this, Somaliland has established its own government, military, currency, and borders, and has maintained relative stability and peace compared to the rest of Somalia.

The situation in Somaliland is generally stable, with a functioning government and a growing economy. However, the lack of international recognition as an independent state has limited its ability to attract foreign investment and has hindered its development. Additionally, the region continues to face challenges such as poverty, youth unemployment, and lack of access to basic services like education and healthcare. Nevertheless, the people of Somaliland have shown resilience and have made significant progress in building a stable and peaceful community despite the ongoing challenges.

## Background: African Union and Somaliland

The Republic of Somaliland, a self-declared state in the Horn of Africa, was once part of the former British Somaliland Protectorate. In 1960, the protectorate gained independence and joined with Italian Somaliland to form the Somali Republic. However, in 1991, after the fall of the military regime in Somalia, the northwestern region declared itself independent as the Republic of Somaliland.

Although Somaliland has not been internationally recognized as a sovereign state, it has functioned as a de facto independent entity with its own government, military, and economy.



Despite this, the international community continues to recognize Somalia as the only legitimate government in the region. This lack of recognition has created challenges for Somaliland, including limited access to international aid and investment.

The situation in Somaliland remains complex and unresolved. While the region has made progress in stabilizing and developing its own institutions, it continues to face political, economic, and security challenges. Without a clear legal status—whether independence or some sort of association—Somaliland is deprived of foreign investment, cooperation assistance, access to international lending markets, payments due for use of its airspace, etc. There have been efforts by the international community to support Somaliland's development and stability, but the status of Somaliland as a self-declared state remains a source of tension in the region.

Besides considering their own interests and the merits of the case presented, countries look to the position of the relevant regional body, in this case the African Union. If accepted into the African Union or even with a favorable recommendation, Somaliland would probably be allowed to join the United Nations; without the AU's endorsement, it is unlikely to gain membership.

The African Union took up the issue in 2005 by sending a fact-finding mission to Somaliland. The official summary of its findings is very favorable towards Somaliland's claims, asserting, "Somaliland's search for recognition [is] historically unique and self-justified in African political history," and it urges the AU to take up the issue with the governments in Mogadishu and Hargeisa without delay. The African Union has since not acted on that report and has played little role since then. Now, 16 years later, it is the time for the African Union to act.





## Questions to Consider

- 1) Should self-governance continue in Somaliland?
- 2) Should a UN peacekeeping force be sent to Somaliland to preserve independence?
- 3) Does the Somalian government have the right to govern its own homeland?
- 4) Who determines whether a group of separatists have the right to self-govern?
- 5) Who has the authority to address the issue and to act in the eyes of Africans and the international community?



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# Positions

## Central Africa

1. Burundi
2. Cameroon
3. Central African Republic
4. Chad
5. Democratic Republic of the Congo
6. Gabon

## Eastern Africa

7. Eritrea
8. Ethiopia
9. Kenya
10. Mauritius
11. Rwanda
12. Somalia

## Northern Africa

13. Algeria
14. Egypt
15. Libya
16. Mauritania
17. Morocco
18. Tunisia

## Southern Africa

19. Angola



20. Namibia
21. Mozambique
22. South Africa
23. Zambia

Western Africa

24. Benin
25. Burkina Faso
26. Ghana
27. Guinea
28. Mali