

Malaysia Airlines Flight 350

Background Guide

GWCIA XXXI

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Conference Policies

Misconduct Policy

GWCIA acknowledges that collegiate Model UN spaces often echo or perpetuate real-world discrimination towards various historically marginalized communities. As such, GWCIA enforces a zero tolerance policy for harassment or discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual identity, national origin, religion, age, disability, or any other identity-based designation. Additionally, GWCIA practices a zero tolerance policy for sexual misconduct of any kind, including sexual harassment and sexual assault. This includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate 1) content in notes passed or documents created during committee sessions; 2) conversations throughout GWCIA; and 3) conduct at The George Washington University campus or at any GWCIA-sponsored programming. If a delegate experiences any kind of discrimination, social discomfort, or sexual misconduct, they are urged to bring it to the attention of any GWCIA Secretariat member or report the instance via our anonymous misconduct form, which can be found on our Conduct Policies website page and in each committee room. Any potential cases of discrimination or sexual misconduct will warrant immediate investigation and may result in disqualification from awards and/or dismissal from the conference at the sole discretion of the secretary-general.

Technology Policy — Crisis & Historical/Specialized

Using technology is prohibited in GWCIA historical/specialized and crisis committees, unless a delegate has an approved accommodation. Moreover, GWCIA Staff has the discretion to enable or disable usage of technology if they deem it necessary or appropriate. GWCIA will provide delegates with one white legal pad and a pen that they may use to write notes if they wish. Delegates are free to bring their own additional notepads, staplers, pens, Post-Its, or other supplies, as these will not be provided.

Plagiarism, Pre-Writing & AI Policy

All pre-written, plagiarized, or AI-generated content, which can include working papers, draft resolutions, directives, or crisis notes, is strictly prohibited at GWCIA. Pre-writing constitutes any language or content that was written outside of unmoderated caucuses in general assemblies and outside of when debate is formally opened in crisis committees. This means that creating content before or after committee sessions or during moderated caucuses in assemblies & specialized committees is pre-writing. Writing during USG feedback or announcements or during guest speakers equally constitutes pre-writing. All dais members and undersecretaries general are specifically instructed to monitor for pre-writing by checking typed and written materials that delegates may have prepared before the conference if potential pre-writing is suspected. By participating in GWCIA, your delegation acknowledges that they understand this policy and the consequences if it is broken. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, verbatim or near-verbatim copying and pasting from academic sources or other websites. Any delegate found guilty of pre-writing, plagiarism, or flagrant AI usage will be immediately disqualified from any award in their committee. The GWCIA Secretariat reserves the right to search computers and laptops, notebooks and binders, USBs, and any form of electronics for Model UN specific documents in response to allegations. They additionally reserve the discretion to run any content through an AI detector. In order to report a case of substantive misconduct, please see the anonymous misconduct form on our Conduct Policies page or contact a member of the Secretariat.

Awards Policy

While GWCIA recognizes that the core value of participating in any Model UN committee is education in international affairs and the development of related skills such as productive collaboration, public speaking, and critical thinking, we also recognize the value of rewarding delegates who are exceptionally prepared and proficient in these skills. At GWCIA, we value delegates who can leverage creativity, diplomacy, substantive knowledge, and critical thinking skills to debate effectively, lead negotiations and blocs, and write comprehensive clauses. We especially look favorably towards delegates who individually develop meaningful solutions to the committee's main issues while keeping in mind the realistic diplomatic dynamics of our world, as well as those delegates who are able to advocate for their solutions and ideas to be adopted. The dais encourages delegates to lead in a manner that uplifts and respects their competitors while also introducing strong, unique solutions that consistently anchor their group's directive or working paper. On the other hand, attempts to undermine the goals of the committee without reason or acting without detailed thought of consequences are discouraged. Any rude, disrespectful, or demeaning conduct towards other delegates' ideas will not be tolerated.

Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

Welcome everyone to GWCIA XXXI! I'm thrilled to be your Chair for this committee and I am so excited to meet all of you! My name is Terissa Alex, and I am a Sophomore here at GW. In the past I have helped out at both GWCIA and our WAMUNC high school conference. This is the first year that I have been able to run a historical/specialized committee of my own and I cannot wait for the enthusiasm and creativity that all of you will bring to it. The Malaysia Flight 350 disappearance is one of modern history's most tragic mysteries. The whereabouts of the passengers, crew, and pilots are still unbeknownst to this day. So I urge you that while we will certainly be creative and enjoy our time in this committee, to be mindful and respectful of the reality of this disappearance. Once again, I am excited to see what you all bring to this committee!

All the Best,
Terissa
terissar@gwmail.gwu.edu

Reminder: Delegates must CC their advisor on any email sent to the Chair or Crisis Director.

Overview of Committee Procedure

Specialized Procedure

GWCIA XXXI Specialized committees will bring together components of both GA and Crisis procedure to create a dynamic, fast-paced debate environment for delegates. Instead of writing a long-form resolution throughout the conference, delegates will write multiple shorter directives. These directives will be submitted to the dais and, if passed, alter the committee in real time, resulting in crisis updates that will drive the direction of debate. Debate will use a combination of moderated caucuses, unmoderated caucuses, and round robins to discuss crisis updates and directives, functioning similarly to a Crisis front room. Please note that Specialized committees will not utilize backroom, so delegates should not expect to send crisis notes.

Introduction to the Committee

The Malaysia Airlines Flight 350 crisis committee will operate similarly to a regular crisis committee. Each delegate will represent an assigned character that has some sort of purpose to the current situation. In the case of this crisis, delegates can represent world leaders, CEO's, and even news anchors. How each delegate chooses to represent their character's goals and motives is entirely up to them, but should align appropriately with the description provided below.

A specialized crisis committee is a fast-paced Model UN simulation where delegates work together to solve problems as they happen. At the start of the committee, the chair introduces the crisis and explains the situation that delegates will be responding to. Each delegate represents a person or organization and will work toward achieving their goals while helping address the crisis. The committee usually begins with a moderated caucus, where delegates raise their placards to speak one at a time. During their speeches, delegates share ideas, propose solutions, and try to convince others to support their plans. The committee then moves into an unmoderated caucus, where delegates can move around the room, discuss ideas with one another, and form teams. Together, they write **directives**, which are short action plans explaining what they want the committee to do to respond to the crisis. Once the directives are complete, the committee returns to a moderated caucus. The groups that wrote each directive present their ideas, and delegates discuss the different proposals by asking questions, sharing opinions, and explaining why they support or disagree with each plan. After the debate, the committee votes on the directives. Any directive that receives enough votes passes and becomes an official action taken by the committee.

Throughout the simulation, the crisis staff will enter the room to deliver **crisis updates**, which reveal how the committee's decisions have affected the situation and often introduce new challenges or unexpected twists. Delegates must then adapt to these new developments, create new solutions, and continue debating, writing directives, and voting. This cycle repeats throughout the committee, making every decision important and giving delegates the chance to shape how the crisis unfolds.

Later on in the committee, due to it being specialized historical, delegates will switch into General Assembly style, and will be responsible for developing resolutions to solve not only the original crisis and questions, but any of the other crises that have arisen since the beginning of the committee.

The goal of this committee is one of two things. 1) Delegates should work to determine what happened to the plane and to get the passengers and crew safely to Beijing. The number one priority is to reunite all passengers and crew with their families and to ensure that there are no serious health risks that have occurred as a result of the plane's disappearance. With the plane being away for this amount of time, it is likely that passengers may have experienced sickness, injury, etc, especially being in such close quarters to one another. Therefore, it must also be ensured that it is actually safe to bring passengers back and reunite them with their families.

The second goal of this committee is to investigate the cause of this disappearance. With a plane tied to a company this significant, there could have been some serious oversight done on letting the plane go in the first place. The plane could have been improperly inspected or something that was not viewable during an inspection could have gone haywire during the actual flight. Additionally, the actions of the pilots need to be heavily scrutinized. What went on in the

cabin that caused this crisis, and how can we create legislation in the future to avoid this? This is a stressful and heartbreaking situation for everyone involved, and it should be this committee's duty to not only bring these passengers home safely, but also to ensure the world learns from this mistake and does not allow it to reoccur.

Background

Leading up to the accident, Malaysia Airlines was consistently regarded as one of the top airlines in the world. It won awards such as Skytrax five star ratings, world's best cabin crew ratings, and recognition for economy class service. However, the economic struggles of the Malaysia Airlines industry were kept heavily under wraps. This was due to intense competition from airlines such as AirAsia, as well as rising fuel prices and major government limitations on commercial flexibility. Malaysia Airlines was struggling to stay afloat, despite its respected status internationally. Therefore, cuts to essential services began to occur, such as reductions to the

On March 8, 2014, Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 disappeared from the radar while making the flight from Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur Airport to the destination in Beijing Capital International Airport. The crew had last communicated with air traffic control about thirty-eight minutes following takeoff. Onboard, there were 227 passengers and 12 crew members, meaning this was a nearly full commercial airline flight. People on this flight may have been returning from business or travel, and were waiting to be reunited with loved ones in China. Unfortunately, this moment has yet to arrive.

As news of the incident began to spread, many families struggled to contact their loved ones who were believed to be on board. With little verified information available, rumors and conflicting reports quickly circulated, making it difficult for families to understand what had happened, whether that be news reports, tabloids, or even government information. Airports and emergency response teams were overwhelmed with phone calls from concerned relatives seeking updates, while officials worked to confirm passenger identities before releasing information. The lack of immediate communication created fear, as families waited anxiously for official

announcements about the status of the passengers and crew. Additionally, it only built further resentment towards the already unstable Malaysian government. Keeping families informed while ensuring that only accurate information was released became one of the highest priorities for authorities responding to the crisis.

At the same time, investigators were called to examine whether the pilot's health may have played a role in the incident. Authorities were asked to review the pilot's medical history, recent health evaluations, training records, and communications with air traffic control to determine whether a medical emergency or another health-related issue could have affected the pilot's ability to safely operate the aircraft. Cockpit voice recordings and flight data were also analyzed for any indications that the pilot experienced physical or mental distress before the incident occurred. Because the investigation was still in its early stages, officials avoided making assumptions and instead focused on gathering evidence to determine whether the pilot's condition contributed to the events.

Another major challenge was determining whether the incident was the result of an accident or intentional tampering. Investigators considered a wide range of possibilities, including mechanical failure, maintenance errors, human error, severe weather, cyber interference, or deliberate sabotage. Specialists carefully examined the aircraft's wreckage, maintenance records, security footage, flight data recorder, and cockpit voice recorder for evidence that could explain what had happened. Until investigators completed a thorough review of all available evidence, authorities stressed that no single theory could be confirmed or ruled out. This uncertainty made the investigation even more difficult and highlighted the importance of conducting a careful, evidence-based inquiry before reaching any conclusions.

Current Situation

- Families are left distraught and confused
    - In the aftermath of such a tragedy, families are left distraught and confused. Many are expecting children, spouses, and parents to come home from this flight. There are strong feelings of worry and distrust, especially towards the Malaysian government. People are convinced that information is being hidden and that there is a plot to keep their loved ones away. Others are convinced that the pilot has intentionally steered the plane off course and is taking the passengers to an unknown destination.
    - The Malaysian government is incredibly unstable at the moment. Recently, there was the controversial election of Najib Razak. His coalition had maintained power, but they had won less than half of the popular vote of the people. Therefore, there were strong resentments already from the citizens, and now there is an international level of scrutiny.
    - Currently, there is no way to reach the flight, despite numerous attempts to check the last seen location. However, there are numerous mysterious blips coming from England at the moment, which the plane should be nowhere near. Therefore, people are starting to suspect the British government for some kind of tampering.

- Malaysian Airlines is experiencing a significant dip in their flight purchases. People are afraid that the airline does not check their flights properly and does not properly evaluate the aircraft nor the skill of the pilot. Therefore, Malaysian Airlines is losing a lot of money and prestige. People are being laid off left and right because they cannot afford to

keep the employees when there is no proper income. People are frustrated because they are losing their jobs and there have already been multiple strikes from employees, making the workplace even more chaotic.

Questions to Consider

1. How can we best bring passengers home?
2. Is the disappearance an accident, or an act of sabotage?
3. How do we ensure that something like this doesn't happen in the future/how do we hold people accountable?

Character List

*The characters represented in this list may have been altered or modified from their real life counterparts, as well as entirely made up. This is to ensure that all delegates have a fun, engaging and enjoyable experience no matter their position. If you find outside information related to your character that contradicts that of your character description, please use the provided description as the final authority on the character's portfolio.

Najib Razak (Prime Minister of Malaysia):

Najib Razak is the Prime Minister of Malaysia and is ultimately responsible for overseeing the government's response to the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370. He is coordinating the efforts of the military, police, aviation authorities, and international partners while attempting to maintain public confidence in his administration. Having recently led his coalition to victory despite losing the popular vote, Najib is already facing political pressure at home. Every decision he makes is being closely scrutinized by both the Malaysian public and the international community. His primary objectives are to locate the aircraft, protect Malaysia's international reputation, and demonstrate strong leadership during an unprecedented national crisis.

Hishammuddin Hussein (Minister of Defence and Acting Minister of Transport):

Hishammuddin Hussein serves as Malaysia's Minister of Defence and Acting Minister of Transport, making him one of the most important officials managing the MH370 crisis. He leads daily press conferences, coordinates military and civilian search operations, and works with foreign governments contributing ships, aircraft, and intelligence. He must carefully balance the release of information with national security concerns while maintaining confidence in the

government's response. As the face of the operational response, he is under immense pressure from the media, families of the passengers, and international governments demanding answers.

Azharuddin Abdul Rahman (Director General of the Department of Civil Aviation Malaysia):

Azharuddin Abdul Rahman is the Director General of the Department of Civil Aviation Malaysia and is leading the technical aviation investigation into MH370's disappearance. He oversees the collection and analysis of radar data, flight records, and communication logs while coordinating with international aviation experts. His responsibility is to provide accurate technical information to government officials and the public, even as new evidence continues to emerge. Every announcement he makes could significantly affect the direction of the search and public perception of the investigation.

Khalid Abu Bakar (Inspector-General of Police):

Khalid Abu Bakar is Malaysia's Inspector-General of Police and is leading the criminal and security investigation into MH370. His team is investigating every possible cause of the disappearance, including terrorism, hijacking, sabotage, and potential involvement by passengers or crew members. He is working with intelligence agencies and international law enforcement organizations to gather evidence while ensuring that speculation does not interfere with the investigation. His findings may determine whether the crisis is treated solely as an aviation accident or as a criminal act.

Ahmad Jauhari Yahya (Chief Executive Officer of Malaysia Airlines):

Ahmad Jauhari Yahya is the Chief Executive Officer of Malaysia Airlines and is responsible for the airline's response to the disappearance. He is coordinating with government agencies,

supporting the families of passengers and crew, and working to maintain confidence in the airline during one of the greatest crises in its history. He must manage the airline's operations while addressing growing international criticism and media attention. Every public statement he makes has the potential to influence public trust in Malaysia Airlines.

Hugh Dunleavy (Chief Commercial Officer, Malaysia Airlines):

Hugh Dunleavy serves as Chief Commercial Officer for Malaysia Airlines and is focused on protecting the airline's commercial operations and international reputation during the crisis. He works alongside the CEO to communicate with customers, travel partners, and the media while helping manage the airline's response strategy. As uncertainty surrounding MH370 continues, he must reassure passengers, investors, and business partners that the airline remains committed to safety and transparency.

Mark Binskin (Vice Chief of the Australian Defense Force):

Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin is one of Australia's senior military leaders and is directing Australia's military contribution to the multinational search effort. Australia has committed aircraft, naval vessels, and surveillance resources to assist Malaysia in locating the missing aircraft. Binskin is coordinating closely with Malaysian defence officials and other international military leaders to maximize the effectiveness of search operations across an enormous search area. His experience in military aviation makes him a key adviser on search strategy and resource deployment.

Ng Chee Meng (Chief of Air Force, Singapore):

Ng Chee Meng is the Chief of the Republic of Singapore Air Force and is leading Singapore's military contribution to the search. Singapore has quickly deployed aircraft and personnel to

assist Malaysia and is working closely with neighbouring countries to improve coordination between search teams. Ng's leadership reflects Singapore's commitment to regional cooperation and humanitarian assistance during this unfolding crisis.

Xi Jinping (President of the People's Republic of China):

Xi Jinping is the President of China and is under significant pressure to secure answers for the families of the 153 Chinese citizens believed to be onboard MH370. China has committed naval vessels, aircraft, satellites, and intelligence resources to assist in the search while urging Malaysia to provide timely and transparent information. Xi must balance protecting Chinese citizens' interests with maintaining diplomatic relations with Malaysia and the other countries involved in the investigation. His government's actions will have major implications for regional diplomacy and public confidence.

Tony Abbott (Prime Minister of Australia):

Tony Abbott is the Prime Minister of Australia and has committed Australian military and civilian resources to support the search for MH370. As the search area expands into the southern Indian Ocean, Australia is taking on an increasingly significant leadership role due to its geographic position and operational capabilities. Abbott is working closely with Malaysia and China while ensuring Australia's contribution remains effective and internationally coordinated. His government is committed to assisting until the aircraft is found.

Julie Bishop (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Australia):

Julie Bishop is Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and is coordinating diplomatic communication between Australia and the many countries participating in the search effort. She works closely with Malaysian and Chinese officials to strengthen international cooperation and

resolve any diplomatic disagreements that arise during the investigation. She is also responsible for communicating Australia's support to affected families and representing Australia's interests on the international stage.

Deborah Hersman (Former Chair of the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board):
Deborah Hersman is a highly respected transportation safety expert whose experience investigating aviation accidents has made her an influential adviser during the MH370 crisis. Although she is not directly involved in the official investigation, governments and media organizations frequently seek her expert analysis to better understand the challenges investigators face. Her knowledge of accident investigation procedures helps explain possible scenarios and informs public discussion about the search effort.

Becky Anderson (CNN International Anchor):
Becky Anderson is one of CNN International's leading journalists covering the disappearance of MH370 from Kuala Lumpur. She is reporting developments as they unfold, interviewing government officials, aviation experts, and families of the missing passengers. Her reporting reaches millions of viewers around the world and has become a major source of international information about the crisis. Through her interviews and coverage, she plays an important role in shaping global public opinion and increasing pressure on governments to provide answers.

Angus Houston (Special Coordinator, Joint Agency Coordination Centre):
Angus Houston is a retired Air Chief Marshal and has been appointed to coordinate Australia's contribution to the multinational search effort. He oversees cooperation between military forces, scientific experts, and civilian agencies while helping organize one of the largest search

operations in aviation history. His leadership and military experience make him one of the most trusted figures managing the international response.

Martin Dolan (Chief Commissioner, Australian Transport Safety Bureau):

Martin Dolan leads the Australian Transport Safety Bureau and is responsible for directing the technical aspects of Australia's involvement in the investigation. He is overseeing satellite analysis, ocean drift modelling, sonar mapping, and search planning to determine where MH370 may have gone down. His scientific expertise is critical in narrowing the search area as investigators continue to analyze new evidence.

Tim Clark (President, Emirates Airline):

Tim Clark is the President of Emirates Airline and one of the aviation industry's most respected executives. Although he is not officially part of the investigation, his extensive experience in long-haul commercial aviation makes him a highly influential voice. Governments, airlines, and the media value his opinions on aircraft operations, flight tracking, and aviation safety as the search continues.

Christopher Boyer (Director of Security, International Air Transport Association):

Christopher Boyer serves as Director of Security for the International Air Transport Association (IATA). He advises airlines and governments on aviation security issues while monitoring the MH370 investigation for implications affecting global airline safety. His expertise helps guide discussions on aircraft tracking, security procedures, and international aviation standards that may become relevant as the investigation progresses.

Hamid Bugo (Family Assistance Coordinator, Malaysia Airlines):

Hamid Bugo is coordinating support services for the families of the passengers and crew aboard

MH370. He organizes family briefings, counselling services, accommodation, and communication between investigators and relatives waiting for updates. As uncertainty continues, he faces the difficult task of providing compassionate support while working with government officials and airline executives to ensure families receive accurate and timely information.