

Sample Crisis Simulation

Outline

1. Simulation overview (topic, goals, format)
2. Crisis Scenario
3. Explanation of responsibilities
4. NSC player roles and planners/control group
5. Key analytical concepts (geopolitical imperatives, strategic objectives, human agency)
6. Other materials – index of terms, maps, and readings

1) Simulation overview

Simulation Topic - U.S. response to Russian military escalation in the Ukraine conflict (potential nuclear crisis)

Knowledge-building goals:

- Understand the high-level security, political, and economic dynamics of the Russia/Ukraine conflict and explore how those dynamics could play out in the future
- Understand and demonstrate the strategic objectives/constraints of the U.S. government in the Ukraine conflict and how those relate to the objectives/constraints of other key actors (Russia, Ukraine, EU/NATO countries, China)
- Understand the role of human agency within the U.S. government and how it factors into the decision-making process of leaders/key officials during a potential nuclear crisis

Skills-building goals:

- Intra-team communication
- Intra-team negotiations
- Intra-team decision-making under time pressure

Format – U.S. National Security Council



Sources: Project Owl OSINT (@projectowlosint), BBC, esri

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2) Crisis scenario:

With continued NATO support, Ukrainian forces have made major military gains in the region of Kherson and are advancing toward Crimea. In response, the Kremlin has ramped up its rhetorical threats over military escalation, including the potential use of nuclear weapons to prevent further loss of territory and to degrade Ukraine’s military capabilities. In an extraordinary meeting, the U.S. National Security Council will be briefed on Russia’s latest moves and will be expected to respond to these moves.

3) NSC player roles:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary of State
- Secretary of Defense
- Secretary of the Treasury
- Secretary of Homeland Security
- Ambassador to the United Nations
- National Security Advisor