

**Committee:** Security Council

**Issue:** The Situation in the Lake Chad Basin region

**Student Officer:** Dionisis Belezinis

**Position:** President

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## PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

My name is Dionisis Belezinis and during this year's ACGMUN I will have the great honor to serve as the President of the Security Council. I am currently an 11<sup>th</sup> grade student of Anavryta Model Lyceum and I dream of studying medicine. MUN has also been an important part of my life, allowing me to expand my horizons and sharpen my critical thinking. Having said those, I am looking forward to our collaboration during the conference. If you have any inquiries concerning the procedure or the topic to be analyzed in the study guide, you can contact me at [dennisbelezinis@gmail.com](mailto:dennisbelezinis@gmail.com).

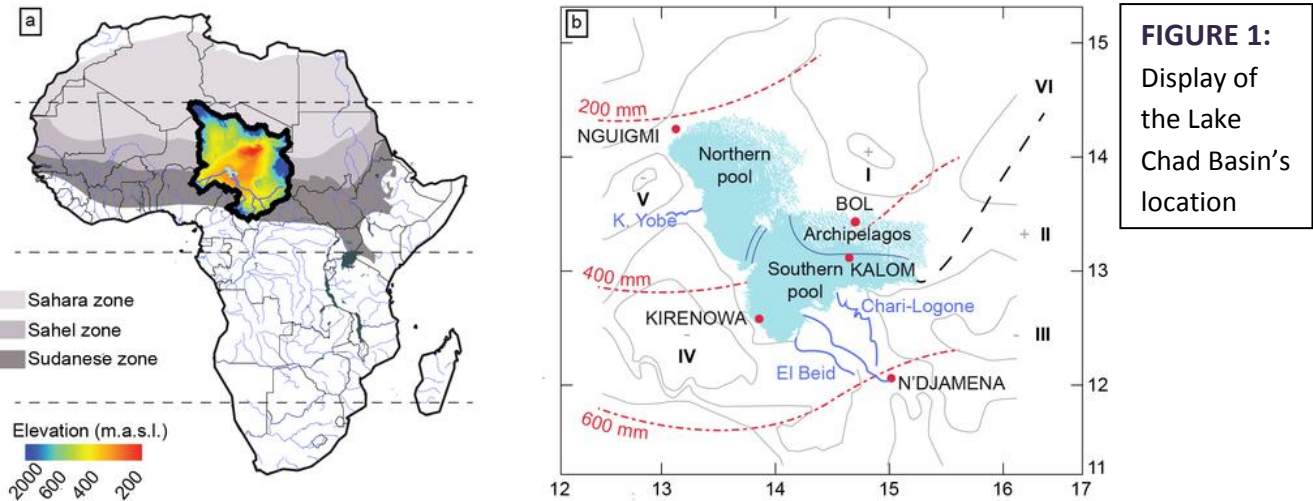
Kind regards,

Dionisis Belezinis

## TOPIC INTRODUCTION

The Lake Chad Basin is located in Northern Central Africa, covering more than 8% of the continent. Chad Basin features two attributes that make the lake a point of interest of all countries. Those two are its strategical place on the map and the fresh water it offers to all countries sharing it, being Algeria, Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Libya, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, Algeria and Libya.

The lake currently faces specific issues, including a harsh climate change, and severe conflicts all over the area. As President Mahamadou Issoufou of Niger has claimed in his speech at the opening of the Paris Climate Conference on Monday, November 30 2015, "Lake Chad Basin is dying". As a result, it is of outmost importance that the Security Council now manages to efficiently alleviate the issue.



## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### Pastureland

A pastureland can be defined as a piece of land where enough grass is being grown for farm animals to eat and grow.

### Climate Change

Climate Change is linked to the sudden change of temperatures and environmental phenomena in the whole world, mainly due to the greenhouse effect.

### Health Infrastructure

The term “health infrastructure” refers to the total of all buildings and facilities, which are either medical, or manage the delivery of healthcare equipment.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Historical Background

The strategical importance of the Lake Chad Basin has been apparent since the medieval period, namely from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, serving as a refuge for many dynasties and their empires. The region was also where the Maba people and the Kingdom of Kano first rebelled and began to spread Islam to the nearby countries, during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. After their absorption by the Sokoto Caliphate during the Fulani War of 1805, the British and French governments decided the fate of Nigeria during the Berlin Conference in 1884-85.

After Nigeria's boundaries have been settled, the control of the Lake Chad passed through many countries, until it reached the influence of the Basin countries between 1956 and 1962 and, then, got into a situation considered as one of the most important and neglected crises of our time.

### **Economy of the Region**

The Lake Chad Basin region relies mainly on agriculture to boost its economy. However, due to the lack of the necessary rainfalls during the year, Chad cannot proceed with the agricultural activities at their finest. More specifically, crop production depends on rainfalls to be successful, thus the lack of the necessary rain hinders the growth of the seeds. In addition to that, the ever-increasing population of the region, in conjunction with the occupation of certain areas in the region by the terrorist organization, Boko Haram, adds up to the worsening of its economic status. Finally, the continuous drilling of the land in the interests of gathering fresh water distorts the natural environment of the area.

### **Environmental Issues**

The economic decline of the region is connected to the environmental issues it confronts. The lack of rainfalls, in conjunction with the recent increase in the annual number of droughts, constitutes the phenomenon of the climate change. As a matter of fact, the Lake Chad Basin is slowly becoming a deserted area and the only hope for the environmental restoration of the area is the slight possibility of rainfalls pouring again in the future.

### **Conflicts in the Area**

The unstable economic and environmental situation in the Lake Chad Basin Region has caused great insecurity to the inhabitants of the region, which was the perfect opportunity for the terrorist group "Boko Haram" to begin attacking it. The Boko Haram insurgency began as a two-day religious clash in 2009 against the Nigerian police officers and led to hundreds of people getting killed, using poison and bomb arrows. The group's motive was to fight for "Western Education". In Hausa, which is a Chadic language spoken in Nigeria, "Western Education" means "Boko Haram".

This conflict had its roots in the unstable economy, which generally introduces an essential factor for the increase of terrorism attacks. Other than that, the huge unemployment rates affected the ideologies of the young people, who started seeing terrorism as the only way for them to make ends meet.



**FIGURE 2:**  
Inhabitants trying to escape the Boko Haram attacks

### Humanitarian Issues

The environmental issues, as well as the conflicts in the Lake Chad Basin region have caused great humanitarian problems and 10.7 million people are in great need of humanitarian aid. According to a relevant research conducted in March 2017, there was a risk that 7.2 million people would die to starvation, 515.000 of which were children. However, there are specific organizations that try to ameliorate the situation by providing the most vital of humanitarian help, including the founding of health infrastructures and the provision of food.

As if the attacks of Boko Haram were not enough, the region also suffers a great deal of abuse by Nigerian soldiers. More specifically, the Amnesty International refers to the soldiers blocking food supplies, thus being responsible for the starvation of many people. 45 women also accused the soldiers of raping them, allegations dismissed by the military as “malicious” and “false”. An extreme situation was also reported, consisting of a woman being raped in exchange for food, despite the soldier’s awareness that the woman was a 5-month pregnant.



**FIGURE 3:**  
The starving children in the Lake Chad Basin Region

### The “Lake Chad Basin” Commission

The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) , or in French, Commission du Bassin du Lac Tchad (CBLT) was founded by the Basin countries in 1964 aiming for fair regulation of the lake’s resources, especially its water resources, as well as for the coordination of development programs. The Commission has also broadened its scope on the resolution of conflicts in the area and the establishment of peace in the region. As a result, the Commission is responsible for partially alleviating the issue in the region, given that in times of climate change, when access to water is essential, the members of the Commission can peacefully divide the access to resources in a fair way.

## MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

### The United States of America

In 2018, the American government has contributed 435 million dollars in response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin region. Despite those attempts, though, displacements and food insecurity issues are still prevalent in the area due to the ever-lasting attacks conducted by Boko Haram and the Islamic State of Iran.

### France

France’s main concern was the ongoing terrorism in the Lake Chad Basin region, which is why the ground mission with the armed forces of Operation Barkhane was



conducted. Having begun in August 2014, the mission aimed for better intelligence sharing between countries considering terrorism events, while supporting their military capability, in case a terrorism action takes place. The Operation also consists of training military sessions, an example of which took place in November 2017.

## Nigeria

The situation in Nigeria is such that 2.4 million people have fled the region afraid of losing their lives to the Boko Haram or because of starving from death. Women in the region are also subject to gender-based violence.



**FIGURE 4:**  
Brief Status  
of the  
Situation in  
Nigeria

## Cameroon

Cameroon is also a victim of the humanitarian crisis in Nigeria. The main issues it confronts are poverty and violence, mainly suicide bombings which have led to the displacement of many families. Luckily, though, the United Kingdom and Canada, as well as the IEDA Relief are actively providing their support, aiming to aid the families in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, and eventually relocate them.

## World Health Organization (WHO)

The WHO has gathered significant information concerning the situation in the Lake Chad Basin and has set objectives to counter the issues, involving the health sector, there. The first goal was enable better access to healthcare, in order to help all people in need of emergency medical aid and the vast number of pregnant women

in Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad. The WHO also aims to stop disease-outbreaks, as well as provide support to those suffering from AIDS.

### United Nations Regional Centre For Peace and Disarmament In Africa (UNREC)

From 18 to 20 December 2017, the UNREC organized a series of training workshops in Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad, in order to urge for the proceeding of disarmament in the region, as well as increase women’s participation and role in that process, and in accordance with the General Assembly’s Resolutions on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Funded by Sweden, the participants in the project were given the appropriate development skills on the use of information and communication technology and awareness was raised on the importance lying in the establishment of gender equality in the area.

### TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
1805	The Fulani War begins in the present area of Nigeria and Cameroon.
1884-1885	The Berlin Conference takes place and Nigeria’s boundaries are settled.
1964	The Lake Chad Basin Commission is founded and begins the fair redistribution of the lake to the Basin countries.
2009	The first attack conducted by the Boko Haram against the Nigerian police officers, leading to the death of hundreds of people.
August 2014	France begins the operation Barkhane, aiming for better intelligence sharing and the establishment of regular military sessions in the countries, which have fallen victims to the issue in the Lake Chad Basin region.
November 30, 2015	Mahamadou Issoufou, President of Niger admits that the Lake Chad Basin is dying.
November 2017	Military session in Chad in the context of the Operation Barkhane

### RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

#### S/RES/2349 (2017)

This resolution was adopted by the Security Council at its 7911th meeting, on 31 March 2017 and addressed humanitarian, development and disarmament issues in

the Lake Chad Basin, as well as follow-up proposals to the Secretary General of the United Nations. More specifically, the terrorist attacks conducted by Boko Haram and the Islamic State of Lebanon were condemned and all Member States were reiterated from funding their actions. UN organizations were also urged to provide their support to the governments of the region, especially in their attempt to relocate and protect refugees. Finally, the Secretary General of the United Nations was urged to visit the region personally and submit a report concerning the situation there.

### **S/2017/764 (2017)**

After the Security Council's relevant proposal, the Secretary General of the United Nations visited the Lake Chad Basin region and submitted a report outlining the following. First and foremost, regions were reacquired from the Boko Haram and intelligence was gathered on their attacks. There has also been an increase of 28.000 in the number of people displaced in 3 months, reaching 228.000. Children were also used by the Boko Haram, including 47 girls, 14 boys and one, whose sex was unknown. The girls were also sexually abused and forced into pregnancy. Finally, there was an apparent lack of education in the area, after the destruction of 2.000 schools. The Secretary General's primary suggestion was to strengthen the collaboration between the United Nations and other organizations.

### **PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE**

Other than the Lake Chad Commission and the American and French actions, groups such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have also taken the initiative to recover the damaged Nigerian communities. For instance, the UNDP strives for the appropriate education, healthcare and water resources in the area, as well as for the customization of the Basin countries' economic policies. Thanks to those actions, schools, healthcare facilities and other governmental buildings have been reconstructed to benefit more than 4000 workers. Over 5.000 farmers, with one fifth of them being feminine, have been given the appropriate support to restart agricultural activities and more than 3.200 small business owners have been appropriately tutored and equipped to be able to compete in the market.

### **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

It is apparent that despite being neglected, the Lake Chad Basin issue is one which needs to be alleviated the soonest possible. For that, a delegate should be able to counter the economic, environmental, terrorism and humanitarian issues in the area. First and foremost, the economy could be boosted by shifting to a different form of economic gains. Secondly, water should be pumped through canals in the



lake, which will replace the needed rainfalls. Other than that, the aggressive nature of the organization “Boko Haram” could be limited by reforming the children’s ideals with the necessary humanitarian education. It should be noted that the boost of the economy in the lake would also discourage the young to profit from joining a terrorist organization. Finally, humanitarian issues can be successfully faced through the collaboration of the UN organs, programs and the Non-Governmental Organizations with the parallel necessary governmental efforts.

You are also inclined to consider the efficiency of fruitful dialogue, cooperation and collaboration between countries, in order to accomplish the sharing of the necessary intelligence and information concerning recent terrorism activities and health problems.

Having those said, you are reminded to propose measures according to your country’s policy and not your personal beliefs, which can also comply with the P-5 policies, to avoid the risk of your clauses getting vetoed.

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## FIGURES

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